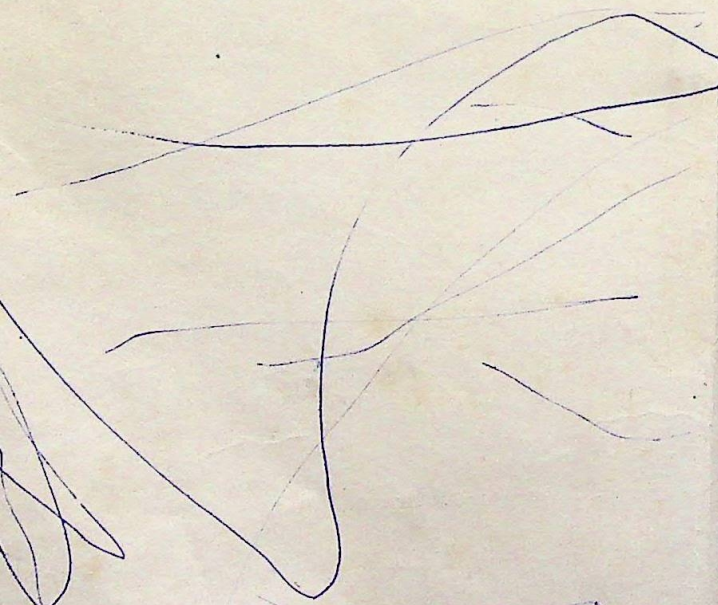


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The Battles
OF
Guru Gobind Singh

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THE Battles of Guru Gobind Singh

BY

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with a foreword by

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PUBLISHED BY

KHALSA COLLEGE RESEARCH DEPARTMENT,

Amritsar.

APRIL 1935.



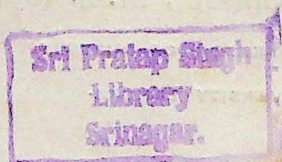
acc. no: 14586

14586

Rs 0-8-0

327

Printed by Sardar Lakhbir Singh Manager & Printer of
The Wazir-i-Hind Press, Hall Bazar, Amritsar, and
Published by S. B. S. Bishan Singh, B.A., I.E.S. (Retd.)
Principal, for the Khalsa College, Amritsar.



FOREWORD.

This monograph was submitted by the writer as a thesis in the examination for the degree of M. A. of Panjab University. As an examiner I was very favourably impressed by its technique and by the writers well balanced judgement in the handling of difficult historical material. I am glad therefore that the essay is being made more widely accessible in its present form, as I think it deserves.

The development of the religious commonwealth of the Sikhs is a subject of which the importance and interest are appreciated by very many besides its own members. Its transformation from the benign quietism of the first Guru into that active, warlike cult, which was very largely the achievement of the tenth and last Guru, is one of the most impressive phenomena of the religious, social and political history of India.

It is gratifying that the Sikhs themselves are earnestly attempting to elucidate the origins and development of the Khalsa, and that their endeavour is actuated not only by piety, but also by a desire for historic accuracy. This little monograph well illustrates the reconciliation of these two motives—a reconciliation which, as every student of religious history knows, is an intensely difficult discipline.

The most tantalisingly obscure period in the history of the Sikhs, and at the same time that which would be almost the most interesting if it can be enlightened, is the eighteenth century A. D.—the interval between the life of Guru Gobind Singh and that of his famous disciple, Maharaja Ranjit Singh. It is greatly to be hoped, therefore, S. Sunder Singh's monograph can be regarded as a prelude to a just and thorough research into this phase by himself and other sikhs as well qualified for the task.

University Hall,

Lahore,

J. F. BRUCE.

2nd April, 1935.

PREFACE.

This thesis was written for my M. A. examination. I have tried in it, to give a connected account of the battles of Guru Gobind Singh from an historical point of view. Incidentally I had to write something about the organization of the Khalsa but in that even I have eschewed discussion of religious principles. I have taken into account those changes alone which bound the Khalsa into a common brotherhood with common ideals & common aspirations. As a student's work this little brochure must have many shortcomings, but it is presented to the public in the hope that abler pens will take up the task of giving to the world a connected story of Sikh history.

I am much indebted to Mr. Gulshan Lall Chopra M. A. (Punjab), Ph. D. (London), Lecturer Govt. College, Lahore, who as my tutor, supervised my work and to Mr. J. F. Bruce M. A. (Cantab), M. A. (Sydney), University Professor of History, who has very kindly spared some moments out of his busy time for writing a foreword. My thanks are also due to the Khalsa College Research Department, who are so kindly publishing this monograph written by an old student of theirs.

Khalsa College,
Amritsar.
14 April, 1935.

SUNDER SINGH,

PREFACE

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INTRODUCTION.

One noticeable feature of that period of Indian history which deals with the Sikh Gurus is that there is a singular paucity of references about them in contemporary materials. Various circumstances account for this, the most important being that the historians of the Mughal period did not realise the significance of the movement initiated by the Sikh Gurus. Most of their works are devoid of any mention of the doings of the Sikhs, or if they do make any mention at all, it is extremely slight or insufficient for our purposes. With the contemporary Sikh writers, however, the case was entirely different. They had other impulses such as, for example, religious enthusiasm, apart from merely recording facts of history, which impelled them to take notice of even the minutest details of the activities of their spiritual leaders. For instance the battles of the sixth Guru and his warriors have been described at great length by the Sikh writers, though not a single reference about them exists among the writings of other contemporaries. A casual statement in *Dabistan-i-Mazahib* by Mohsan Fanni¹ about the battles which the sixth Guru fought and a still more fragmentary mention about the 10th Guru by Sujan Rai in his *Khulasal-tul-Twarik* form almost solitary exceptions to this general lack of

1 See pages 234-35 by Mohsan Fanni.

information¹.

Thus, in dealing with the battles of Guru Gobind Singh, one has to depend almost exclusively upon the accounts offered by the Sikh historians².

The Sikh historians of course, out of their enthusiastic admiration have written stories which it is difficult for the modern mind to accept without hesitation. Besides most of them seem to have merely accepted facts as they came to their notice and without making any sifting enquiries about them. Their accounts indeed are often vitiated by personal prejudices and predilections or at least by readiness to believe themselves and to convince others that their heroes were capable of supernatural achievements. One has therefore, to be most cautious in accepting their opinion about men and events with a view to arrive at proper conclusions. This caution involves in practice a careful comparison between the view-points of various writers concerning particular facts of historical significance.

In the case of the tenth Guru most of his battles were fought with the hill rajas, who

-
2. Khafi Khan also makes no mention of his battles except a passing reference to the Guru's joining Bahadur Shah before his battle with Kam Bakhsh. Whether the Guru actually took part in the battle cannot be ascertained by this.
 2. It is just possible that as historical research progresses in the Punjab, the historical records of the several hill states of this period might be brought to light, though in view of most of such states having ceased to exist the chances of such discoveries are extremely remote.

were no more than big zamindars. The control of the Mughal Emperors was not so effective in these hills as in the plains of the Punjab, and therefore, they were inclined for some time to leave them without interference in their internecine warfare. That is another reason why the non-Sikh writers of the period have ignored to take notice of these campaigns and even of the doings of Guru Gobind Singh whom they considered to be a mere zamindar. It is only when the hill states appealed to Emperor Aurangzeb for assistance and he sent his officers to suppress the movement that we find a brief mention made of the Guru in contemporary writings.

In the following paras I have attempted to offer a comparative evaluation of the various sources upon which the accompanying thesis is based.

Bachittar Natak, by Guru Gobind Singh.

The book can be divided into four parts. The first three deal with the invocation to God and certain mythological stories of the past, and then give an account of the advent of the tenth Guru into this world and the mission on which he was sent. These chapters are of little or no importance in the construction of the political history of the period. The fourth part is the only part with which we as students of history are mainly concerned. This deals with the battles of Bhangani, Nadaun, Husaini Yudh and one waged when Prince Muazzim

visited Punjab. This account should largely be taken as reliable, for one thing because the Guru shows a rather scrupulous regard for fairness in his estimate of the various acts of courage and heroism of his adversaries; but being written in the form of a monologue we have to supply certain valuable links from other sources.

Zafarnama or the letter written by Guru Gobind Singh to Aurangzeb :—

This consists of 'admonitory parables' addressed to the emperor and throws some light on the battles of Anandpur and Chamkaur.

Sri Gur Sobha (Sambat 1758 or 1701 A. D.)² by Kavi Sena Pat.

The author has described almost all the battles of the Guru and has given an interesting chapter on the organisation of the Khalsa. He can be relied upon particularly with regard to those events of which he was an eye-witness. The book has been only recently brought to light and Macaulife or any other writer has not so far made use of that in his writings.

1. The letter is incorporated in the Dasam Granth.

2. There is also another reading of the date of compilation in Gur Sobha which takes it forward to Sambat 1798 or 1741 A. D. This must however, be certain that the author was a contemporary of the Guru.

Mahma Parkash Wartak (Sambat 1798 or 1741 A. D.), by Kirpal Dass Bawa :—

This work gives some important events from the lives of all the Sikh Gurus and attempts a description of Guru Gobind Singh's troops; but it lacks in any frequent references to his battles.

Mahma Parkash by Sarup Dass Bhalla, (Sambat 1833 or 1776 A. D.)

The author was a descendant of the third Guru. He gives a connected story of the time from the 1st to the 10th Guru. The late Bhai Karam Singh, the historian of the Sikhs regarded this work as quite dependable though I find that its chronology is very defective and its order of events extremely confused. Bhai Vir Singh of Amritsar possesses hand-written copies of this and Mahma Parkash Wartak and these have remained practically unexplored to the present day.

Sau Sakhi :—

The book is reputed to have been written or dictated by one Bhai Gurbax Singh just

1. The version of the book that is extant at present can be dated so far as Sambat 1890 or 1833 A. D. and is the reproduction of the copy which the author of Suraj Parkash had with him. Bhai Karam Singh mentions to have seen an earlier copy dated Sambat 1858 or 1799 A.D. (in his article "Sikh Itihas," Phulwari, June 1929), but that is not traceable now.

after the death of Guru Gobind Singh. Unfortunately its present form is of later growth as it includes writings of some other persons whose names are not mentioned nor is it clear as to when they lived. The original dictation has been tempered with.

Gur Bilas (Sambat 1854 or 1797 A. D.) by Bhai Sukha Singh :—

The book is written in the form of a popular history. The author was a resident of Anandpur where the Guru had lived for a long time. He has recorded largely the traditional accounts current during his own life (1766 to 1835 A. D.) but may have also read some historical literature existing in his time. He was a devout follower of Sikh religion and has depicted the Guru as an incarnation of God, thus invoking the supernatural to explain events which could not be explained otherwise. But as far as the record of events is concerned he is quite reliable.

Suraj Parkash (Sambat 1900 or 1843 A. D.) by Bhai Santokh Singh¹.

The work gives a comprehensive account of the lives of the ten Gurus. The author was in the employ of the Raja of Kaithal who greatly helped him in the collection of authentic material. The author had with him

1. The book has been quite recently annotated by Bhai Vir Singh in fourteen big volumes.

almost all the books mentioned above and some others¹ besides. It is unfortunate that the author died immediately after writing the book and had no time to revise his manuscript. His account shows that he scrupulously avoided any wilful deviation from what he had read in older books; yet in the light of a comparative study of various accounts one feels that he did allow certain inaccuracies to creep into his account merely because he did not care to verify whatever he had studied.

Besides the books mentioned above, Panth Parkash by Gyani Gyan Singh (Sambat 1935 or 1878 A. D.), Kitabi Twarikh-i-Punjab by Khushwaqat Rai (1834 A. D.), Twarikh-i-Punjab by Bute Shah (1848 A. D.), Travels of Guru Teg Bahadur by Sardar Sir Attar Singh of Bahadur (1876 A. D.), the Sketch of the Sikhs by Malcolm (1810 A. D.), Cunningham's History of the Sikhs and certain recent books as Dr. Gokal Chand Narang's Transformation of Sikhism and Macauliffe's Sikh Religion have been studied with advantage.

The battles of Guru Gobind Singh fall under two natural divisions—his conflict with the hill chiefs and later his campaigns against Imperial Subedars and their forces. I have maintained this division in the following thesis. But as any account of the battles and their historical significance cannot be regarded as

1. Gur Bilas by Mani Singh and Singh Sagar are two other old books preserved in the Patiala Library. These were also consulted by the author of Suraj Parkash (Sikh Itihas. Phulwari, June, 1929).

complète without understanding the organization of the Khalsa under Guru Gobind Singh. a separate chapter on " The Organization of the Khalsa " has been added. Likewise, the general methods of the warfare of the Sikhs under Guru Gobind Singh and the circumstances and causes of their triumph over their enemies have also been added in two separate chapters.

In writing this thesis I have almost wholly depended on contemporary or nearly contemporary writings and have not taken into account the writings of much later periods. Some of these sources like Gur Sobha, Mahma Parkash by Sarup Dass Bhalla have remained prectically unexplored to the present day and others like Bachitar Natak, Gur Bilas, Sau Sakhi and Suraj Parkash have been used by a few western writeas like Malcolm and Macauliffe. While searching these records one labours under a great difficulty in understanding the language and expression used therein. None of them is pure Punjabi and I had to spend a lot of time in reading and assimilating some of these works. Besides working out a connected narrative from these I have also tried to fix the chronology of some of the important battles. Gur Bilas alone, of all the early wrintings, has given two dates, that of the battle of Bhangani and Anandpur. Of these the latter alone can be accepted as approximately correct and the dates of the battle of Nadaun and 'Husaini Yudh' I had to work up by synchronising stray bits of infomration in the early records.

The Battles of Guru Gobind Singh

CHAPTER I

CONFLICT WITH THE HILL CHIEFS

Battle of Bhangani

After the execution of Guru Tegh Bahadur at Delhi Guru Gobind Singh was installed on the *Gaddi* of Guruship at Anandpur¹. In a short time many followers gathered round him and his power and resources steadily increased. This alarmed some of the hill chiefs, as Khushwaqt Rai writes (in *Tawarikh-i-Sikhan* on page 28): "People began to gather round him in exceedingly large numbers. Guru Gobind Singh called himself a King² and received royal honours from his followers. This was not free from danger. When he had lived for some time at Anandpur and Kiratpur in this state, the rajas of Kahlur and Handur began to fear that if he was allowed to continue in that way he might become too powerful for them. After some time, they even feared that he might try to take possession of the hill country under their sway. For this reason they some time obstructed the people carrying

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1. Anandpur was then known as Makhawal. The site of the town had been bought by Guru Tegh Bahadur long before and he had settled there with his family.
 2. Long before this the Sikhs had begun to style the Guru as "Sacha Padshah" or the true king. (See Mohsan Fanni in *Dabistan-i-Mazahib*, p. 233).

offerings such as horses, elephants, etc. to the Guru. This was what provided the Guru with a cause for hostility with the rajas."

Owing to a small incident of the pilgrims to Anandpur having been once plundered on their way, the Guru ordered the Sikhs to go about armed¹ and took steps to teach them their use. A big drum² was also ordered to be prepared. All this greatly incensed the hill chiefs and they were on the look-out for an opportunity to crush this rising danger. The occasion was found soon after.

Raja Rattan Rai of Asam came to see the Guru at this time and presented him with³ (1) five horses with gold trappings, (2) a throne (Chauki) which was so contrived that puppets appeared from it on pressing a button and played *chaupar*, (3) a weapon which could be used as a revolver, a sword, a lance, a dagger

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1. On one occasion when some of the people coming to the Guru were looted by some neighbouring villagers, the matter was reported to the Guru. He was much displeased to hear his Sikhs being unable to defend themselves. Forthwith he ordered that in future all his followers must keep arms (page 149 b, Mahma Parkash Wartak). On the next page of the same book the author says, "The Guru was overjoyed to see arms. He almost worshipped them. One who presented him with arms could win his favour more easily than one who simply offered money, etc. (Page 150 b, Mahma Parkash Wartak.)"
 2. Some historians have attached great significance to the construction of the new drum. This, however, was no innovation. The Sikhs had this custom of beating the drum since the time of the fourth Guru and uptil now the drum is beaten every morning in the Darbar Sahib when the Holy Granth is taken from Akal Takht to the Temple proper
 3. Suraj Parkash, page 4584-85. Bute Shah in his book seems to have confused the presents brought by a Sikh from Kabul and those brought by Raja Rattan Rai whom he wrongly believed to have come from the Deccan.

or a club, (4) a beautiful cup and (5) a well-tamed elephant called *Parsadi*. A Kabuli tent costing about two lacs was brought by a Sikh from Kabul. When Bhim Chand heard of this he went to the Guru to see¹ these things.

The Guru received him well and displayed all the presents in an open Durbar. The sight of so much wealth at Guru's court excited jealousy within him and he determined to wrest from him the elephant at least by whatever methods he could. Accordingly when he reached home he sent a messenger to the Guru asking for the elephant. The Guru suspecting the design of the raja politely² refused the request. He, however, offered another elephant in his camp but the Raja would not be satisfied with that.

As a last resort the Raja³ sent his brother-in-law Raja Kesari Chand of Jaswal and his Brahmin priest to the Guru. These two were incensed at the Guru's refusal and used insulting language at the Guru's court. When they returned home Bhim Chand wrote an insolent letter to the Guru. This was accepted by the Guru as an ultimatum of war.

-
1. The Rajas had also some faith in Guru till the Guru initiated the baptism of the sword and thus openly gave up the old traditions of caste, etc. Bute Shah hints at it on page 173 b. Manuscript, Punjab University Library.
 2. Bhai Sukha Singh in his "Gur Bilas" says that the Raja who had presented the elephant had requested the Guru to reserve it for his personal use (Page 18) This is not strange since a disciple may often desire so.
 3. The sending of Kesari Chand and Pamma is not mentioned in Gur Bilas. Bute Shah mentions the story, but he has confused the names and says that the Rajas themselves used insulting language at the Guru's court and were given a sound thrashing (Page 143 b).

Bhim Chand, however, could not fight at that time, as preparations were being made for his son's marriage. The date of marriage having been fixed, he could not let the auspicious day be marred by fights.

Meanwhile the Guru received an invitation from Medni Parkash, Raja of Nahan, to come to his state. The reason of this invitation from Medni Parkash seems twofold. In the first place not being on friendly terms with his neighbouring Raja Fateh Shah of Srinagar, he feared a combined¹ attack from the rest of the hill chiefs. Secondly Ram Rai (the disinherited son of the 7th Guru) had established himself at Khurbadi (the present Dera Dun) and Fateh Shah and Ram Rai being both interested in Hath Yog a friendship had grown between them. As the influence of Ram Rai was fast extending in that part of the country, the Raja of Nahan was afraid that along with the religious influence of Ram Rai the political influence of Fateh Shah might spread in his country. The only way to counteract the religious influence was to invite the Guru. The Guru too, pressed by some of his counsellors² thought it advisable to go to Nahan.

-
1. Since Fateh Shah was to give his daughter in marriage to Bhim Chand's son, Bhim Chand would naturally have taken his side. Also Bhim Chand being the most influential and powerful of the hill chiefs, could command powerful allies as was the case when he later on fought with the Guru. (Suraj Parkash, page 4678, Ansu 46, Ank 16 to 17.)
 2. Masands were particularly anxious that the Guru should not be engaged in arms and had on several occasions before that tried to dissuade the Guru from taking up a martial career. They pressed him at this time to leave Makhawal and to go to Nahan. Guru's mother also advised him to leave for Nahan. (Gur Bilas, pages 121-122-D. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE)

During his stay at Nahan, the Guru at the suggestion of the Raja built a fort on the banks of the Jamuna, which he named Paunta. He spent most of his time there in training his troops. Through his influence with his nephew, Baba Ram Rai, the Guru was also able to effect a reconciliation between the Rajas of Nahan and Srinagar (present Garhwal).

The day of marriage of Fateh Shah's daughter now approached, and the Guru received an invitation from him to attend it. The Guru did not think it proper to go personally but sent his Dewan, Nand Chand, with some men to represent him. A valuable necklace said to be worth a lakh and a quarter was sent as a wedding present for the bride.

Meanwhile Bhim Chand with the marriage party started from Kahlur. He had to pass through Paunta. Accordingly he sent his Wazir to get permission of the Guru to pass that way, but as he had a large force with him the Guru did not allow them¹ all to pass that way. He however, permitted the bride-groom and some officers to cross the ferry near the fort. Others had to reach Srinagar by a circuitous path.

When Fateh Shah heard of all this he felt aggrieved at this impediment placed by the

1. The Guru thought it impolitic to allow two armies amongst whom there was open enmity to come to such close quarters. Hence he allowed the bridegroom and some officers only to pass that way. That the marriage party had an unusual number of troops with them is clear from Suraj Parkash and the cause of refusal has been made quite clear by Bhai Vir Singh in his newly annotated Suraj Parkash (Pages 4752-54).

Guru in the way of his daughter's marriage. He was further forced by Bhim Chand to refuse the Guru's wedding present. This was only reluctantly¹ agreed to by Fateh Shah. When, however, Nand Chand was returning with his men the raja's troops gave them a hot pursuit and the Dewan could effect the way home with great difficulty.

Preparations for battle were now made on both sides. The Guru selected Bhangani (six miles from Paunta between the Jamuna and the Sur) as the proper place to give battle to the enemy and moved thither.

Bhim Chand had a very large army and rajas² Kirpal of Katoch, Gopal of Guler, Hari Chand of Handur, Fateh Shah of Srinagar and the Raja of Jaswal were amongst his allies. With all these he proceeded towards Bhangani.

Seeing such odds against them, some sections of the Guru's troops were thoroughly alarmed. Four hundred Pathans out of a total of five hundred³, who had been sent to the Guru by a friend of his, Pir Budhu Shah, turned traitors. Also about five hundred

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1. His reluctance to engage in arms with the Guru is proved by the fact that he took up arms only when Bhim Chand threatened to refuse his daughter's hand if he did not join them.
 2. Raja Kirpal had before that sent a letter to the Guru to fight against Bhim Chand. His conduct appears to be treacherous.
 3. The names of the Sirdars who turned traitors were Bhikan Khan, Nijabat Khan and Hayat Khan. Only Kale Khan with his troop remained faithful to the Guru (Suraj Parkash, page 4779). Bute Shah, however, mentions five Sirdars—Kale Khan, Bhikan Khan, Nijabat Khan, Hayat Khan and Jawahar Khan and says all five of them went over to the enemy's side (Page 174 b).

'Udasis' who were staying with the Guru fled away at night. Only their leader Mahant Kirpal remained there.

The Battle:—

The Guru's scouts informed him at this time that the enemy was quite near. The troops were arranged in lines; in the centre was Hari Chand Handuria, on his right were the treacherous Pathans who had left the Guru. In the rear was Raja Fateh Shah with his men.

Meanwhile a contingent was seen to approach which wrought havoc in the enemy's lines. Nand Chand in great perplexity applied to the Guru for information. Soon a rider came before the Guru and informed him that Budhu Shah¹ with his four sons and seven hundred disciples had come to help the Guru at this time of need. The Guru was of course overjoyed to receive this timely reinforcement and ordered his men to charge.

The Guru had appointed Sango Shah², Jit Mal, Gulab Chand, Ganga Ram and Mahari Chand (his cousins) as commanders of his army. They now proceeded to deliver the attack.

-
1. When the Pathans who were sent to the Guru by Budhu Shah had deserted, he (the Guru) had sent a message to Bhudhu Shah. Bhudhu Shah had come at this time to wipe off the stigma of his men having proved traitors
 2. "Sango Shah then got the title, Shah Sangram or the Lord of the Battle, because he had done such brave deeds in the battle."
(Sri Guru Sobha, page 37.)

Hari Chand Handuria has been particularly mentioned to have fought very heroically on the enemy's side. Writing about him the Guru says in Vichitra Natak, "The brave Hari Chand then took the field. He planted his feet firmly in the field and discharged arrows which killed whomsoever they touched." And further, "Hari Chand was angry. He shot volleys of arrows and killed tens of my men." He was wounded by a spear from Jit Mal and fell into a swoon.

Hayat Khan, Nijabat Khan and Bhikhan Khan, the Pathan chiefs who had left the Guru, goaded by the Raja's taunts then came forward. Mahant Kirpal from Guru's side asked permission to engage Hayat Khan. It was a sight to see him proceeding with only a wooden club to engage a practised warrior armed with the latest weapons of destruction. Hayat Khan scorned fighting a Mahant armed only with a club, but being challenged twice he dealt a blow with his sword. Receiving it on his club, however, the Mahant struck Hayat Khan on his head with the same and forthwith finished him. Just then the Guru's army swerved a little. Ram Singh, a mechanic from Benares, had made a cannon for the Guru. He now began to fire it taking deadly aim at the enemy and thus bringing destruction among their ranks.

Sango Shah engaged in a single combat with Nijabat Khan and before he fell down with a wound from the Pathan's sword, had killed him with his weapon.

When the Guru saw Sango Shah's fall he was so much enraged that he took up arms personally. The Guru states in Bachittar Natak, "When I saw Lord of the Battle, i. e. Sango Shah die in the field, thy worm (Guru Gobind Singh) took up bow and arrow. Taking aim I shot an arrow at a Pathan. The enemy fell down as if bitten by a viper. When he fell down on the ground I took up my second arrow and taking aim shot it at the face of Bhikhan Khan. With blood streaming the Khan fled away leaving his horse in the field. The third arrow killed the horse. Meanwhile Hari Chand regained his consciousness and taking his bow shot many arrows. Whosoever was struck by these arrows could not survive and leaving this earthly body went to paradise. He shot two arrows at a time and slew mighty warriors and horses. Whomsoever the arrow struck lost his consciousness; the arrow passed right through his body." The Guru then mentions Hari Chand's attack on his own person. "Hari Chand was enraged and took up the bow. His first arrow killed my steed. His second arrow was aimed at me but the Almighty protected me and it only grazed my ear. His third arrow struck my belt and tore open the armour. The point touched my skin but no serious wound was inflicted. It is only God who protected me, knowing me His servant. When the arrow struck me I too was enraged; taking my bow I discharged arrows in abundance. All my warriors came running and did the same. Then I aimed at the young hero

and struck him. Hari Chand was killed and his warriors were run over. Death devoured him who was called a raja among hundred thousand rajas. The enemy fled in consternation and through God's grace, I was victorious. We raised aloud the song of triumph. I showered gold on my warriors who were pleased."

The Guru then went to the place where Jit Mal and Sango Shah had fallen, and disposed of the dead bodies of the several warriors according to their religious rites.

Budhu Shah with two¹ of his surviving sons then came to the Guru. The Guru was then combing his hair. He presented him a turban², a comb with some loose hair of his head, a *kard* (small knife) and five thousand rupees for his followers. He also liberally rewarded all those who had risked their lives for him.

The Guru's Sikhs were greatly³ encouraged with their success and would have followed the enemy to their capital, but the Guru restrained them and ordered an immediate⁴ march to Anandpur.

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1. He had four sons two of whom were killed in the battle.
 2. These presents are still preserved in the Nabha State. They were acquired from Budhu Shah's descendants by Raja Bharpur Singh.
 3. The Sikhs were so overjoyed that they actually made wild plans of attacking Srinagar and Delhi (Sukha Singh's *Gur Bilas*, page 159).
 4. Bhai Vir Singh in his newly annotated *Suraj Parkash* (page 4829) suggests that some peace treaty must have been made between the Guru and Fateh Shah and Bhim Chand before he left Paunta for Anandpur. But the following reasons go against this assumption :—

Bhai Sukha Singh² gives Samat 1746 (i. e. 1689 A. D.) as the date of this battle. But this seems to me to have been fought some three or four years earlier, because Santokh Singh in his *Suraj Parkash* mentions the birth of the Guru's eldest son, Ajit Singh, nine months after the Guru reached Anandpur. The birth of Ajit Singh occurred in Samat 1743 according to Sikh historians³. Bute Shah⁴, however, mentions Samat 1744. Accepting any of these days then the battle must have been fought in Samat 1742 or 1743 (i. e. 1685 or 86 A. D.)

(a) If a peace treaty had been made, the Sikhs would not have committed acts of hostility against Bhim Chand after the battle of Bhangani. But both Gurbilas and Suraj Parkash make mention of the raids of Sikhs into his territory after their return to Anandpur. It was these raids that compelled Bhim Chand to sue for peace. He first sent his minister and then came himself to conclude a peace with the Guru.

(b) On page 140, Gurbilas Bhai Sukha Singh, when Bhim Chand's messenger goes to obtain a permit from the Guru to pass via Paunta, the Guru's reply is: "When we have conquered Bhim Chand, we will go to Anandpur and live there in peace." This shows that the Guru had already made his plans of going to Anandpur, as soon as possible. When the battle of Bhangani was won, this was the most opportune time to leave Paunta and fortify Anandpur against conflicts with the hill chiefs.

(c) Bute Shah makes this point quite clear when he says (Tawarikh-i-Punjab, page 174 b): "The Guru reached Anandpur even before the Rajas had got to their capitals.....The rajas had not then the power to engage in battle with the Guru. Instead, they feared that he may turn them out of even their own country." This shows that Guru started for Anandpur immediately not because any peace treaty had been signed there, but because he was strong and powerful enough after his recent success to live in his own town (Gurbilas, page 160).

2. Gur Bilas, page 160.

3. Suraj Parkash, page 4887, Footnote.

4. Tawarikh-i-Punjab, page 171 (P. U. Ms.).

Battle of Nadaun.

The Emperor Aurangzeb had now been for long in the Deccan fighting with Tana Shah of Golconda and others. During his absence there were great administrative irregularities in the north. Mian Khan, an officer of the king went to Jammu and sent his assistant, Alif Khan, to levy tribute from the hill chiefs—Kirpal Chand of Kangra, Ram Singh of Jaswal Bhim Chand of Kahlur, Sukh Dev of Jasrota, Prithi Chand of Dadhwal and others.

Raja Kripal on hearing this hastened to make his submission to Alif Khan, paying him some money and asking him to exact tribute first from Bhim Chand, the strongest of the hill chiefs, at which all the rest would pay. Dayal, the chief of Bijarwal also, probably on the persuasion of Kripal, promised to help Alif Khan.

When Bhim Chand heard of this he determined to give battle to the enemy rather than pay tribute and called upon the other hill rajas as well as the Guru to join him in that. As the Guru was on friendly terms¹ with Bhim Chand he promised help and taking his army with him joined the rajas at Nadaun.

Alif Khan's armies were encamped on an eminence and had also built wooden stockades for their protection. Thus they had a great

1. After the battle of Bhangani, the Guru had hastened to fortify Anandpur and from this stronghold the Sikhs continued to raid Bhim Chand's territory. Being unable to withstand the Sikh forces after his defeat at Bhangani, he had made his peace with the Guru.

superiority of position.

The attack was opened by Bhim Chand's troops. They marched in a column towards the enemy's position and fought bravely, but their arrows and shots only struck the wooden rafters and made little effect on them. The attack was renewed with greater vigour by Bhim Chand and his allies, but again they were repulsed by the skill of Kripal and Dayal.

So much of destruction on his side simply enraged Bhim Chand. Invoking the help of Hanuman, the Monkey god, he once more collected his troops and those of his allies and appealed strongly to the Guru (he had not so far gone to the front) to make a united attack. This had the desired effect. All the soldiers fought with greater vigour, and proceeding in column rushed the stockades the enemy had set up. Kirpal and Dayal now thought it fit to leave their fastness and to come out and fight in the open. A furious battle now raged which inflicted a great loss on both sides. Just then Bhim Chand's armies swerved a little. This was noticed by Prithi Chand who, drawing his sword, went to the front and set an example to his armies.

On the other side Raja Dayal had taken the bow and was plying his arrows with great effect. Seeing this the Guru too took up his gun and bow. He himself describes his engagement with the enemy as follows: "Then thy worm (the Guru) took up his gun and aimed it at the heart of a raja. Fighting

bravely he tottered to the ground. Even when falling the proud warrior in his rage shouted, 'kill'. I put aside the gun and took up my bow, shot four arrows with my right hand and three with the left. I could not see whether they struck anybody. By that time God turned the battle in our favour. The enemy was driven into the river. Arrows and bullets flew in abundance as if the warriors were playing 'holi,'¹ with one another. Pierced by arrows and spears the warriors fell to the ground, their clothes red with blood as if they had just then played 'holi'. The enemy was subdued and we returned to our camps. They crossed the river and camped on the other side. After a lapse of about two hours in the darkness of night the enemy bolted away leaving some camp fires burning and some men to beat the drums."² The Guru stayed there for eight days after the battle when³ he returned to Anandpur.

On his way back when the Guru reached the village Alsun, a scuffle arose between the inhabitants of the village and the Sikhs on some minor⁴ matter. The Sikhs at this looted the village and proceeded home.

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1. "Holi" is a Hindu festival in which people throw coloured water on one another. Here it refers to the blood-stained clothes.
 2. This was done so that the enemy might not notice their flight and pursue them.
 3. Both Gur Bilas and Suraj Parkash say that after the battle Bhim Chand began negotiations with Alif Khan without the consent of the Guru. This displeased the Guru who then ordered return to Anandpur.
 4. Gian Singh in his *Twarikh Guru Khalsa* (pages 459-60) mentions that the inhabitants of Alsun had thrice before that time looted some Sikhs going to see the Guru and now insulted some Sikhs

According to Bachittar Natak¹, a good deal of time passed after the battle of Bhangani when Mian Khan came to Jammu and sent Alif Khan to Nadaun. Suraj Parkash mentions that this happened when Aurangzeb was fighting in the Deccan against Tana Shah of Golconda, i. e. about 1687 A. D. The battle of Bhangani having been fought in 1685 or 1686 A. D., the date of this battle therefore falls in 1687 A. D. or thereabout.

Husaini Yudh.

or

The Battle with Husain

The Guru then spent a few years peacefully at Anandpur. At that time one Dilawar Khan², who had attained power in the Punjab, sent his son with a large army to smash the power of the Guru first and then to conquer the other hill chiefs.

As he proceeded with his army he determined to make a surprise attack on the Guru. Accordingly he ordered his troops to cross the Sutlej river just before midnight. But at this time one of the Guru's scouts ran to inform

by profane language. Suraj Parkash also (in Rut 3, Ansu 33, Ank 3 to 6) hints at the loot of the Sikh Sangat. Sena Pat however gives no cause. He simply says, "They then reached the village Alsun. Here the Guru ordered the loot of the village." (Gur Sobha, page 16).

1. Bachittar Natak, Chapter 9th, 1st Chaupai.
2. Suraj Parkash mentions that he was a 'Panjhazari Sirdar' (page 4849).

the Guru who was roused from his sleep by his 'Deorhidar' named Alam.

The Guru at once ordered the 'Ranjit Nagara'¹ to be beaten and the Sikhs almost immediately proceeded to the river to give battle to the enemy. They shot bullets and arrows and reports of their artillery gave an exaggerated impression of their number.

The enemy's troops already tired with the march of the day and almost numbed with the coldness of the water of the stream, they had to cross at midnight in cold weather, were unprepared for this sudden attack of the Sikhs and beat a retreat without giving battle. While thus fleeing away they looted Barwan village and stayed for some time at Bhalan. Then they returned to Dilawar Khan.

The son hung his head in shame at the sight of the father who was aflame with rage when he heard of this defeat. Husain, a slave of Dilawar Khan, then offered to take the field against the Guru. With a large army he proceeded towards Anandpur plundering Awan and Dadhwal on the way.

Seeing the plight of these villages and the strength of Husain's army, the the faithless raja Bhim Chand broke his treaty with the Guru and cast his lot with the enemy. Kirpal Chand of Kangra had already paid his tribute to Hussain. Bhim Chand now did the same and all three proceeded to plunder Anandpur.

1. The Guru's drum was named Ranjit Nagara or the drum of victory.

When the Guru heard this he made full preparations for the struggle, but before reaching Anandpur, Hussain was drawn into a fight with the Raja of Guler. It happened in this way.

When Raja Gopal of Guler heard that Bhim Chand and Kirpal had joined Hussain he also desired to negotiate a peace with him. Accordingly he offered to pay a part of the tribute. Hussain, however, feeling himself very strong by the joining of the two rajas demanded a larger sum, and in case of non-payment threatened to attack Guler before going to Anandpur. Gopal, who had on his side Raja Ram Singh of Jaswal, thought it better to fight rather than pay the heavy sum of Rs. 10,000/- which Hussain demanded.

Hussain was enraged to hear this and at once proceeded to Guler to teach Gopal a lesson. He laid siege to the town and stopped all supplies from going in. The inhabitants were soon reduced to straits and sued for peace. but Hussain would not lessen his demands. Sangtia¹, a sikh of the Guru, sent there on Gopal's request, now proceeded to open negotiations on his behalf. It was decided that Sangtia should bring Gopal to the camp where the terms would be settled. Kirpal and Bhim Chand gave a pledge that they would not

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1. When Hussain did not lessen his demand on Gopal's request, he sent a messenger to the Guru to send some one to negotiate on his behalf. He might have thought that this would give an idea of a possible union between him and the Guru and might perhaps soften Hussain. The Guru sent Sangtia and seven Sikhs for this purpose.

molest Gopal in the course of negotiations.

Sangtia exerted his influence with Gopal and brought him to the camp. Hussain was adamant. He would accept not a pie less than 10,000/- which Gopal would not pay. When the negotiations were on the point of breaking, Kirpal and Bhim Chand, going back on their word to Sangatia conspired to arrest Gopal, who however, managed to rejoin his armies, whence he sent them a message of defiance.

Hussain at once ordered a march on the city and the fight began with indescribable vehemence. Just when the battle was raging at its highest pitch, Hussain who had been fighting very bravely and had personally killed a lot of persons on the enemy's side, was struck with an arrow and fell down dead. Raja Kirpal too fell fighting. Himmat and Kimmat, two very brave officers of Hussain were also slain. Seeing this Bhim Chand took to flight. "Thus", says the Guru, "Gopal was victorious and the battle came to an end. Everybody then went home and the rain of bullets that was originally intended for me was showered by the Almighty on another's head."¹

Gopal was overjoyed at his victory and sent large offerings to the Guru and also thanked him for his support.

When Dilawar Khan heard this he was greatly enraged and sent Jujhar Singh to attack the Guru. But when, Jujhar Singh

1. Vichitra Natak.

reached Bhalan, Gaj Singh of Jaswal attacked him. A contested battle raged in which Jujhar Singh was killed.

Just at that time Aurangzeb sent prince Muazzim, afterwards known as Bahadur Shah, to manage the affairs of the Punjab which were all in a mess. Many of the 'Masands' who were with the Guru at this time were frightened to hear of the prince's arrival and fled away to hide themselves in the hills. But as the Guru writes in his *Bichitra Natak*, General Mirza Beg meted out proper punishment to all those who had deserted the Guru.

While mentioning this incident in *Vichitra Natak* the Guru says, "Both Guru Nanak's and Baber's family have been set up by God. The former should be regarded as kings of religion and the latter as kings of the world. The descendants of Baber exact money forcibly from those who do not pay Guru Nanak's dues. They punish them severely and then completely loot their villages." These words acknowledging the worldly supremacy of Baber's descendants and the fact that the Prince did not molest the Guru but on the other hand looted and punished those who had deserted the Guru, seems to suggest that some sort of understanding was arrived at between the Prince and the Guru, which was continued after Aurangzeb's death, when the Guru is said to have helped Bahadur Shah and also stayed with him for some time. A very good reason is given by Bhai Sukha

Singh for this understanding. He says, "When¹ Bahadur Shah had come some way into the Punjab, his counsellors² advised him as follows: "This world is said to be a castle of dust. Everybody dies when his or her time comes. So when Aurangzeb travels to Heaven (i. e. dies), Azim (Bahadur Shah's younger brother) who is already the master of the Deccan and the rest of your father's territory, would not let you have that without a struggle. Hence you should not quarrel with the Guru (and thus lose your support in the Punjab)." Bahadur Shah's companions might have seen the considerable influence that the Guru possessed in the Punjab and thus advised him not to molest him, for when the time of struggle for the throne came the Sikhs would at least remain neutral if they would not actually come to his assistance.

All this and later on the mention of Guru's help to Bahadur Shah strongly goes to prove the probability of some understanding having been arrived at this time between the two.

Bachitar Natak³ says that soon after the battle of Husain, Aurangzeb sent his son to 'Madhar Des'. Muazam was appointed Governor of Multan from 1696 A. D. to 1698 A. D.⁴

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1. Sukha Singh (Gur Bilas, pages 334-35) has placed the coming of Bahadur Shah after the first battle of Anandpur, but he is palpably wrong for the Guru himself in the Vichitra Natak puts this visit after the battle with Hussain.
 2. One of the councillors is mentioned to be Nand Lal who was afterwards a devout disciple of the Guru. This further strengthened the belief that such an advice might have been offered.
 3. Bachitar Natak, Chapter 13, Pauni 1st.
 4. Maasir-i-Alamgiri, pages 373 and 382.

Bachitar Natak also mentions the sending of an officer to the hills. Just at this time we find the Guru writing a letter¹ to Rama and Tiloka, the ancestors of the present rulers of the Phulkian States to bring soldiers for assistance. The letter is dated Bhadaun Sambat 1753 or 1696 A. D. I think the Guru wanted to make his position secure against this attack and wrote this letter to Rama and Tiloka in that connection. The date of Husaini Yudh may, therefore, be just before that i. e. about 1695 A. D.

Fight with Balia Chand and Alam Chand.

The number of soldiers continued to increase at Anandpur and the small town could not meet the forage requirements of the horses of the army. The neighbouring potentates being inimical, the Sikhs had to raid the surrounding forests for fodder. The requirements of the chase were also met in a similar way. The Sikhs perhaps justified these raids because of their being at war with the hill chiefs, but these raids constantly reminded the hill chiefs of a rising danger and they were always on the lookout for an opportunity to put an end to it.

Accordingly one day when the Guru was out hunting in the Dun, Balia Chand and Alam Chand, two of the hill chiefs, seeing him with only a small retinue thought of capturing him. A fight ensued, but the Sikhs were too few to

¹ A photo litho copy of this letter is with me.

withstand the sudden attack and had to retreat a little. The Guru who was at some distance hurried to their assistance and the Sikhs thus encouraged resumed the attack. Just then Ude Singh also reached there with a reinforcement. This timely help saved the situation. At this time Alam Chand with a drawn sword ran to the front to attack. He was faced by Alam Singh who receiving his blow on his shield moved his sword in turn and cut off his right arm. At this Alam Chand left the field leaving Balia Chand in sole command.

The latter fought bravely for a time but was then hit by a shot fired by Ude Singh and fell wounded. At this, rest of the army took to heels. The Guru was victorious and returned to Anandpur.

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CHAPTER II

THE INSTITUTION OF THE KHALSA.

It was now fifteen years since the Guru had begun his work of arming the Sikhs. He had made an attempt to organise the hill chiefs for a common cause, but their internecine quarrels and jealousies were too much to be overcome. Long ago in Bichitra Natak he had declared that he had come to "Protect the good people and to uproot the evil-doers," and he had realised that the hill Rajputs would not combine to undertake this work; perhaps there was a reason for it. The Mohammedan hold on the hill tracts, except the Kashmir Valley, was not so firm and there was no religious persecution on a scale that might goad them into common action. They had not that pride of race which had compelled Rajputs like Rana Partap to fight to a finish against the Mughal domination. In fact they were big zamindars who did see no wrong in acknowledging the supremacy of the Great Mughal at Delhi, provided they were left free to follow their old pursuits undisturbed. And the Imperial Subedar did not molest them when they had paid their tributes occasionally. So instead of helping the Guru they became jealous of his growing influence and thought he was working for carving out a small principality for himself and thus tried their best to turn him out of Anandpur. Failing to combine the hill chiefs for a common cause, the Guru now resolved to

do the work single-handed with the help of his own followers. The work of religious and social reconstruction had now been carried on for more than two centuries. It was now time to give the community a definite organisation which would blend them into a brotherhood with common ideals.

It is a common mistake of the historians to believe that it was Guru Gobind Singh who first gave a military turn to the peaceful organisation of the Sikhs that had continued till the time of the ninth Guru. The peculiarly militant characteristics which came so essentially to be associated with the Sikhs in time of the 10th Guru had grown, developed and taken definite shape through several decades which covered the period of pontificacy of his predecessors¹.

What Guru Gobind Singh² did was this. Now that he had successfully fought a few battles with the hill chiefs and the Imperial Subedars and found out that even among the so-called rabble of the population, amongst castes that were ever oppressed viz. barbers, washermen, Jats and Chamars (sweepers) there was the material with

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1. "Gobind himself, in fact, as well as his work was the natural product of the process of evolution that had been going on ever since the foundation of Sikhism. The harvest which ripened in the time of Guru Gobind Singh had been sown by Guru Nanak and watered by his successors. The sword which carved the Khalsa's way to glory was undoubtedly forged by Govind but the steel had been provided by Nanak." Transformation of Sikhism, Page 1.
 2. The Sikhs had actually taken up the sword and wielded it with success at the time of the 6th Guru.

which he could oppose the very highest in the social ranks. The only thing required was to give them a proper organisation and *instil* into their minds the belief that the lowest among them were equal to the highest. And his dramatic action on the first of Baisakh Sambat 1756 (1699 A. D.), when he stood forth before the congregation with a drawn sword summoning those who were prepared to follow him and his principles, even if in so doing they had to meet death, was well calculated to achieve this object. The principles which he stated in clear terms were not new. What he did was their clear and definite enunciation. He took a bold step in recognising only those as *Khalsa* who acted on these principles. Several men of the high castes who were assembled there refused to enter this new organisation of Guru Gobind Singh, "But though several refused to accept the Guru's religion, about 20,000 stood up and promised to obey him as they had the fullest faith in his divine mission"¹.

There was nothing new in the religious portions of the instructions that the Guru gave at that time. They were the same fundamentally as the teachings of Guru Nanak and there is no need to discuss them here but his instructions regarding the social structure of the new community which helped the Sikhs to unite for a common action must be discussed.

(a) The Guru had now determined that the curse of caste system and untouchability

1. Translated from the report of Ghulam Mohayy-ud din to Aurangzeb at this occasion, by Macauliffe, page 94, Vol. 5.
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should no more be a source of disunion amongst his Khalsas and so he definitely laid down the following discipline¹: "Let all embrace one creed and obliterate differences of religion. Let the four Hindu castes who have different rules for their guidance abandon them all, adopt the one form of adoration and become brothers. Let no one deem himself superior to another."² And on another occasion, "The four castes are like pan, supari, chuna and katha, i. e. betel leaf, betel nut, lime and catechu, none of which by itself could give ruddiness to the lips, strength to the teeth or relish to the tongue."³

He went further than that. He taught by practical examples. When a low caste brought the head of Guru Teg Bahadur from Delhi he embraced him publicly and said, "Rangretas (the low caste sweepers) are the sons of the Guru." The first act of Guru Nanak when he began his work was to live and dine with a low caste Bhai Lalo of Eminabad. The third Guru ordered that all who came to see him must dine out of the common kitchen. The tenth Guru now ordered that all Khalsas must drink nectar out of the same vessel at the time of their baptism. The destruction of caste in the matter

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1. Before that Guru Nanak had himself lived with people of low caste as Bhai Lalo and Guru Amar Das the third Guru had started a Langar (Dining hall), where all castes must dine together.
 2. The Guru's first sermon to his disciples as reported by Ghulam Mohayy-ud-din to Aurangzeb (Maculiffe, page 93, Vol. 5)
 3. Transformation of Sikhism, page 78.

of inter-dining¹ among the Khalsa was now complete.

(b) So far Rajputs and Khashatrias alone as a class followed the profession of arms. This distinction had made the Hindus very weak because only a small portion of their population could turn out as effectives in time of need. The Guru now ordered that every Khalsa must go about armed. He thus made all the four Varnas and even the untouchables share in the pride of the defence of their Dharma and country and thus increased the number of effectives in the small community that had gathered around him.

(c) Having done this the Guru proceeded to give a distinctive uniform to his followers. A 'Khalsa' was not to get himself shaved, he must put on a kachha (shorts), a kara (an iron bracelet) and a kirpan (a sword). Towards the same end, the Guru ordered his Sikhs to be named alike, all names ending with 'Singh' meaning 'lion'; and to have one form of salutation: 'Wahiguru ji ka Khalsa, Sri Wahiguru ji ki Fateh'.

"Abolition of caste, equality of privileges with one another and with the Guru, common worship, common place of pilgrimage, common baptism for all classes, and lastly common

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1. The Guru was also alive to the dangers of ascendancy of a class among the followers of the same religion and he proceeded to root out that from the very origin. Having given baptism to the first five Sikhs, he had the baptism administered to himself, taking the very same vows which his disciples had taken; thus showing himself as one of them. This he makes clear when he delivers: "Khalsa is my friend and family. The Khalsa is my says: Khalsa is my body and soul, Khalsa is the life of my life."

external appearance—these were the means, besides common leadership and the community of aspirations, which Govind employed to bring about unity among his followers and by which he bound them together in a compact mass before they were hurled against the legions of the great Mughals.¹ Before the tenth Guru, it was the classes which were appealed to, but now he addressed the masses as a whole and transformed them into something rich and strange.

Having achieved this unity the Guru further tried to infuse the spirit of optimism into his followers. They were taught that "one 'Khalsa' is equal to a lakh and a quarter" and is invincible and invulnerable. The creation by the Guru of a vast amount of literature on war was calculated to achieve the same end.

This is in brief, what the Guru did in this field. He wanted to create a mass awakening and to show to the people that they were strong enough to check the tide of political tyranny and religious persecution; and later events only show that he admirably succeeded in the mission that he had undertaken.

It must, however, be made clear that the Guru was not against Muhammadanism as such. In almost all his battles several Muhammedans fought on his side, and on one occasion on his leaving the battlefield of Chamkaur it was only through the help of two Mohammedan helpers (Ghani Khan and Nabi

1. Transformation of Sikhism, page 82.

Khan), that his life was saved. This is further elucidated from his own writings, "Some became Bairagis, some Sanyasis and Yogis, some celebrate Brahmacharis, some Hindus, some Turks, some Rafzis, some Shias by accident. Know all humankind as one"¹.

"Karta¹ and Karim¹ are the appellations of the same God. He is All-merciful and giver of food to all. Misled by ignorance, do not believe that there is a separate God for Hindus and Muhammadans.

"There is one God for all. All are similar in appearance and have the same light in them".

It reaches its climax in: "Temples and Mosques are the same. There is no difference between the Puja (of Hindus) and the Nimaz (of Muhammadans). Mankind is one, though individuals appear different.

"Gods and demons, Yakshas² and Ghandarva³, Muslims and Hindus are one. Differences in form they owe to the differences in their countries.

"Otherwise, they have got similar eyes, and similar ears, similar structure of bodies and similar mode of speech. All beings are composed of Earth, Air, Fire and Water (the four elements). Allah (of Muhammadans) and Abhekh (of Hindus) are the same. Pūranas (the religious book of

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1. Karta is the Hindu name for the Creator: Rahim is used in Mohammedan scriptures for the same.
 2. Yakshas are the followers of 'Kuber' the god of wealth.
 3. Ghandarvas are the singers of gods.

Hindus) and Quran (of Muhammadans) are one. All have got the same form and the same structure.

"Just as millions of sparks spring out of the same fire, but appearing separate for a while, they again merge into the same flame.

"Just as millions of bubbles arise in water, the bubbles of water are nothing but water.

"Just as millions of dust particles arise out of dust but are absorbed in dust again.

"Similarly souls and bodies arise out of the same Being. They arise out of Him and to Him they will return".

The institution of Khalsa was not a jehad against Muhammadanism as such. But his father had fallen victim to religious persecution and he wanted his Sikhs to have strength enough to withstand that.

Later on the Sikhs became a powerful cause of the destruction of the Mughal Government, but there are incidents which prove that the tenth Guru did not make that his aim. When Prince Muazzim came to the Punjab, he advised his Sikhs in the plainest terms to accept the descendants of Baber as their worldly kings. He wanted freedom of belief for all and could brook no coercion in matters of religion.

The 'Khalsa' was not organised for aggression. The sword was only the last resort.

The duty of Khalsa is clearly mentioned in Prem Sumarg as:—

1. Translated from the original Akal Ustat.

"The Khalsa should be ever armed. He should be a lion at heart with the meek appearance of a cow. When he finds that evil doers persist in mischief and the king does not dispense justice, and religion is in danger, then seeing his opportunity, he should take up arms. After all this is the last resort."¹

That the Sikhs took up arms in self-defence in the time of the sixth Guru is shown by Bhai Gurdas as :

"A sown field requires a fence round it and a garden needs some row of kikar to surround it. The snakes guard the Sandal wood and a house is protected by a lock and a watch-dog."

The ideal of Khalsa is reached when—"He protects the weak and tries to root out the evil-doers."

¹ چو کار از همه حیلتی درگذشت حلال است بردن به شمشیر دست

i. e. when all peaceful means have been tried, then alone is it proper to wield the sword.

CHAPTER III

CONFLICT WITH THE IMPERIAL SUBEDARS.

First Battle of Anandpur¹

When both Balia Chand and Alam Chand were defeated by the Guru, the hill rajas began to think seriously of this rising menace. The Guru had yet a small following with him, but this was daily increasing. "How would they be able to contend against him", the rajas thought, "if his followers grow to thousands?" All joined heads and sent a wakil to the Emperor's court to get help from him. The Emperor was away in the Deccan, but the Subedar left in charge of Delhi received the complaint and forwarded it to Aurangzeb. After a time it was intimated to the hill chiefs that the Imperial army could be sent to help them if they were prepared to pay its expenses. The rajas agreed to that and Dina Beg and Painsa Khan, two Panjhzari Sardars, were sent with their armies to reduce Anandpur. The Rajas Bhim Chand of Kahlur, Bir Singh of Jaswal and Madan Pal Sirmur with their armies joined them on their way.

The Guru also made preparations for war. He appointed the five Beloved Ones, Daya Singh, Dharm Singh, Himat Singh, Mohkam Singh and Sahib Singh, whom he had first baptised, as his generals. Alam Singh and Ude Singh were also given important commands.

The battle raged with great vehemence.

1. This battle is mentioned in Sakhi 36 of *Sau Sakhi*.
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The two armies stood on the opposite sides of a small stream. Hundreds of arrows were shot from both sides and the shots fired from their matchlocks appeared like a shower of rain. The Guru rode his horse and taking his stand in the midst of his army, encouraged them by speech and action.

When the battle was at its height Painda Khan thought of engaging in a single combat with the Guru and thus settle the affair. He rode straight to the Guru and challenged him aloud to a fight. Hearing this the Guru came forward and both engaged in a combat. All eyes were fixed on them. Painda Khan aimed the first shot. He shot two arrows but missed the mark; the first slightly touched the Guru's ear and the second only his turban without causing any injury to his person. Now it was the Guru's turn. He took aim and shot an arrow at Painda Khan's ear. It struck him and he fell down wounded. The Guru then cut off his head with a sword.¹

When Painda Khan was killed, the army of the hill chiefs took to flight, but Dina Beg continued the struggle for a time. He was however wounded and had to retreat. The Guru's troops pursued them as far as Khidrabad². The Guru properly cremated the bodies of his dead Sikhs and all returned to their places.

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1. I have translated the original almost verbatim from Suraj Parkash, page 5229.
 2. There is now a Gurdawara at this place.

Second Battle of Anandpur

The rising power of the Khalsa was a constant menace to the hill chiefs. Often the Khalsa would venture into their territory and when they did not sell fodder would forcibly seize it from their subjects. Filled with jealousy and tired of the complaints of his subjects, Bhim Chand determined to make an end of the Guru. He proposed to send an envoy to the Emperor,¹ but Handuria proposed that all of them combined should try their hand first and if they were not successful they would request the Emperor for help. Bhim Chand liked the idea and invitations were sent to almost all the hill chiefs. Rajas of Kotoch, Jammu, Nurpur, Mandi, Kulu, Kainthal, Guler, Chander, Srinagar (Garhwal), Busher and Dadhwal responded to their invitation, and a letter was sent to the Guru asking him to surrender or take up arms against them.

The Guru was very angry and replied to the challenge in the following words:—

“I shall never pay the tribute without a fight. You demand money from me, but you can have it only at the point of the spear. Friendship with ignorant fools is of no avail. It is evident that there must be a fight now. If,

1. Bhai Sukha Singh in his *Gur Bilas* mentions that the envoy was sent to the Emperor who sent Zair Dasat Khan, Subedar of Lahore, for their help. Gur Sobha only makes mention of the complaint but does not mention the action taken. Most probably the version given by Suraj Parkash that they postponed the sending of an envoy for a time is correct. The envoy was sent after this defeat and the Imperial armies then caused the Sikhs to retreat.

however, you accept my protection, you can have what you desire¹."

The envoy returned with this message and vigorous preparations for war began on both sides. The Gujars and Rangars² under the leadership of Jagatullah joined the hill chiefs and about five hundred Sikhs of Manjha under the leadership of Baksh Singh, Gurbaksh Singh, Kalal Singh of Bharowal and Duni Chand came to the help of the Guru.

Within Anandpur were two forts, Fatehgarh and Lohgarh. Sher Singh and Nahar Singh with five hundred men each, were placed in charge of Lohgarh and Ude Singh was appointed to defend Fatehgarh. The Guru instructed his Sikhs not to go beyond the city and to remain on the defensive as far as possible.

Meanwhile the enemy laid siege to the city. Volleys of shots and arrows were showered on the Sikhs. Seeing this, Ajit Singh, the eldest son of the Guru asked permission to engage them in open. The Guru was greatly pleased at this and sent him forth at the head of one hundred Sikhs. Sallying out of the fort they made a furious charge and fought desperately with the enemy.

Seeing this, Bhim Chand urged forward all

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1. Gur Sobha by Kavi Sena Pat.
 2. These people lived on the frontiers of the hill territory and they often indulged in plunder. Once or twice they had tried to loot the Guru's sikhs and were accordingly punished by him. They had, therefore, a grudge against the Guru and gladly joined the hill rajas.

his forces and himself proceeded to where the battle was thickest. A desperate fight ensued and both sides suffered heavily. The Guru and his companions in the fort were plying their arrows with great effect. The Raja of Jaswal proceeded with his infantry and engaged with Bhai Ude Singh's contingent which faced them boldly and in spite of all efforts of the raja did not fall back.

Jagatullah, the leader of the Gujars, urged by Bhim Chand now came forth with his contingent and engaged in the battle with great vehemence. Alam Singh, Bachitar Singh and Daya Singh came forth and faced him with their men. Just when the battle was at its highest Jagatullah was hit by a shot from Sahib Singh and fell down dead. There was now a rush of the enemy who wanted to take away his dead body. But Alam Singh shouted forth to the Khalsa to stand there and not allow its removal. At this, Man Singh who was holding the Guru's standard rushed forth and fixed it near the dead body. Raja Ghumand Chand goaded his men to fight desperately and to snatch the Guru's standard. In the charge that was made many of the Sikhs were killed but they retained possession of the body till nightfall, when the respective armies retired to their quarters for rest.

The rajas were in dismay at the result of the day's battle and the Raja of Mandi actually suggested reconciliation with the Guru, but the Raja of Hapur and the Raja of Jaswal

opposed him and offered to make a more determined effort the next day to expel the Guru.

As the day dawned, the hill chiefs with their armies advanced on the sikhs who, however, offered a valiant resistance. The fighting continued thus till the mid-day when Ajit Singh, the Guru's son, again prepared to renew the contest. The Guru counselled caution and sent him forth with hundreds of Sikhs to meet the enemy. Ajit Singh discharged arrows which took fatal effect and fought where the battle was the thickest. After a time his steed was killed but he renewed the charger and continued his fight in the same vein. It was now clear to the hill chiefs that they would not be successful in open battle. They, therefore, did not come to close quarters and decided to spend all their resources on the siege and to cut off the supplies of the Sikhs.

At this, the Sikhs resorted to night sorties¹, in which they attacked the enemy's camp in darkness and carried away their supplies.

The siege lasted for many days² but without any visible effect on the Sikhs. At this Kesri Chand determined to renew the attack. A drunken elephant was to be driven to the gate of Lohgarh fort and the troops to sally in through the breach thus made.

When the Guru heard this he appointed

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1. One night when the Guru was asleep, the Sikhs made a sally without taking his permission. This attack was quite unexpected and the Sikhs wrought a great havoc among the enemy's troops.
 2. Gur Bilasopur was to be 20 days.

Duni Chand¹ to attack the elephant the next morning². He was, however, terribly frightened and left the Guru's camp at night. The Guru then sent forth Bachitar Singh³, who taking his spear struck it on the elephant's head with all his might. The elephant at this took fright and turning back trod underfoot many of its own men. A sally by the Sikhs at the same time proved very effective and a large number of the enemy's men were put to sword. Kesri Chand of Jaswal, having taken a vow overnight to fight till death if unsuccessful, now fought desperately and checked this onslaught of the Sikhs. He communicated his zeal to his followers who killed many of the Sikhs. Seeing this Ude Singh went forth to meet Kesri Chand and challenged him to engage with him single-handed. The raja shot an arrow which missed Ude Singh and struck his saddle cloth. Ude Singh in turn, made a rush at him and cut off his head with one blow. Poising the head on his spear and raising it aloft he rode towards the fort in triumph. Upon this the Sikhs rallied and cut off all the foot soldiers of the hill army within reach. The enemy thus

1. A detailed account of as to how Duni Chand, frightened out of breath and life, went to several prominent Sikh leaders, viz. Daya Singh, Sahib Singh and last of all to Gurbakhsh Singh and his unsuccessful attempts to persuade them to leave the Guru is given by Gur Bilas and Suraj Parkash.
2. It is said that Duni Chand broke his leg while trying to scale the wall of the fort and was afterwards bitten by a snake and died soon after he reached his home.
3. Bachitar Singh of Bahi Rupia clan was one of the Guru's personal bodyguard. An interesting account of how he was made to drink before he went out to meet the elephant is given by Suraj Parkash.

pressed began to retreat. Just then the Raja of Handur was severely wounded by brave Sahib Singh.

The rest of the rajas were all broken hearted at night, but Ghumand Chand, the Raja of Kangra, took the lead the next morning and the battle was renewed. The hill chiefs now fought with desperation and vengeance and killed many of the Sikhs. Alam Singh at this shot at him but the bullet only struck his horse which fell down dead. There was a sharp melee round Ghumand Chand when he fell down from the horse but his party succeeded in rescuing him. During the rest of the day the hill soldiers generally pressed the Sikhs, but when Ghumand Chand was retiring for rest in the evening, he was struck by a chance bullet and was seriously wounded. This completely broke down their heart and the hill chiefs took to flight, one by one, under the cover of the night. Thus ended the second battle of Anandpur in Guru's favour.

Battle of Nirmoh.

Defeated in open battle the rajas now tried treachery. A message¹ was sent to the Guru to the effect that if he vacated Anandpur,

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1. A novel way of the vow taken by the rajas is mentioned. On the suggestion of Pamma, the priest of Bhim Chand, he was sent with an image of a cow prepared from flour to Anandpur. He went there and left that and a letter at the gate of the fort, where the Guru resided. This was noticed by the gate-keepers and reported to the Guru. The Guru sent for the letter and read it. All this was done to show that the hill chiefs took a vow of the sacred cow that they would not molest him on his leaving Anandpur.

the Rajas vowed not to trouble him any more. The Guru¹ taking them at their word ordered a march out of the fort and camped in open at Nirmoh.

The rajas of Kahlur and Handur who had adopted this stratagem to bring the Guru out of the fort, now attacked him. The Guru was quite² prepared for it and in the scuffle that ensued the Sikhs fought so bravely that the rajas had to retreat.

The rajas again³ appealed for help to Wazir Khan, the Subedar of Sirhind. Having received orders from Delhi Wazir Khan now proceeded with a large army to attack the Guru.

As the rajas were encamped at a distance, the Sikhs made desultory attacks on them from time to time. One day the Guru was holding a 'Diwan'⁴ on a mound near by in the open. The

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1. He knew well from his experience that the Rajas would be tempted to attack him in the open. But in order to put the rajas in the wrong in the public eye he accepted their promise.
 2. Suraj Parkash and Gur Sobha mention that the Sikhs attacked some villages first. Gur Bilas and Panth Parkash have given the version mentioned above. After the stratagem employed by the hill rajas, which is given both by Suraj Parkash and Gur Sobha, the latter alone seems to be the true version. Later on in Ansu 42, Ank 9, the author of Suraj Parkash too hints that the Paharias who had brought the Guru out of the fort by this strategy, had concerted a plan of attacking him in the open.

It is just possible that the Sikhs coming to know of the premeditated attack of the hill rajas might have taken the offensive but any aggression on the part of the Sikhs is incompatible with the evacuation of the fort by the Guru, trusting the word of the hill rajas.

3. An envoy had already been sent to the Emperor and the Subedar of Sirhind for help.
4. The Guru was not commanding a mercenary army. He was leading volunteers and, therefore, would take every risk to set an example. Besides by temperament he did not mind facing danger.

hill rajas noticed this and promised large rewards to a Muhammadan gunner to kill the Guru. He took aim and fired but the shot missed the Guru and struck a man standing just behind him. The Guru at once took up his bow and shot an arrow at the gunner. It hit the mark and brought down the gunner before he could reload. With a second arrow the Guru killed the gunner's brother who was helping him in the operation. The bodies of the Muhammadan gunners were buried in a place thenceforth called 'Sihai Tibbi' or 'the black hill'. The Sikhs built a votive temple at the place where the Sikh fanning the Guru was killed.

Meanwhile, Wazir Khan reached there with a large army. The Guru was now in a very dangerous position, with the hill armies on one side and Wazir Khan's troops on the other. The Sikhs, however, decided to stand faithfully by the Guru and fight for him. The battle started with all its ferocity and in a short time many soldiers were killed on both sides. Wazir Khan ordered a sudden rush of troops to capture the Guru but he was ably defended by his son Ajit Singh and others. They checked the advance of the army and cut down rows of them. The carnage continued till night when the warriors retired for rest.¹

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1. At night, the rajas represented to Wazir Khan that the Guru had invited them all to join his religion and fight against the Emperor; and it was on that account that they were now fighting against him. This and other flattering talk was employed to urge the Subedar to make a more determined attack the next day.

As the day dawned the Imperial forces and the allied hill army made such a furious assault that the Guru was obliged to give way. Thinking, however, that Anandpur will not be so safe he decided to proceed to Basali, the Raja¹ of which place had so often invited him.

Ude Singh, Alam Singh Daya Singh and Mukkam Singh with the Guru's son Ajit Singh and one thousand Sikhs were in the front; the Guru being in the centre, the rear was made up by Sahib Singh at the head of one thousand of the choicest soldiers of the Sikh army. Thus arranged the Guru beat a retreat.

This was a signal for the enemy's forces to renew the charge. They now attacked the Sikhs from flank and rear and a desperate attack was made to seize the Guru as they were crossing the river Sutlej. The Sikhs too fought heroically and protected the Guru with great valour. At this time² Sahib Singh who was in the rear died fighting bravely to the last. His companions taking the dead body with them also crossed the river with the Guru and they all reached Basali.

The allied troops too reluctant to pursue the Guru beyond the river now returned to their homes. The hill chiefs were greatly pleased having, as they thought, thus got rid

1. Bhai Vir Singh has found out the name of this raja as Salahi Chand. Twarikh-i-Khalsa mentions the name as Dharampal. Bhai Ji suggests that he might have been so called because of his being a very pious and religious raja (Suraj Parkash, page 5367, Footnote).

2. Gur Sobha mentions that Sahib Singh was killed in the scuffle that took place before the arrival of Wazir Khan.

of the Guru and gave large presents to Wazir Khan, who returned to Sirhind.

Battle of Basali.

Being encouraged by this retreat of the Guru to Basali some of the troops¹ crossed Sutlej and attacked the Sikhs. This was, however, a short affair. The Sikhs put up a heroic defence and soon put the hill army to flight.

Just at this time complaints were lodged before the Guru that the inhabitants of the village Kalmot (mostly Gujars and Ranghars) had looted some of the Sikhs proceeding to the Guru. The Guru kept quiet over it for a time but when complaints grew loud, he one day ordered a march towards that village. When, the Sikhs reached Kalmot the Guru ordered an attack.

The enemy was quite unprepared for it and the Sikhs easily overpowered them and rushed into the fortress². At night the Ranghars again gathered their forces and came to attack the Guru. The Sikhs were very anxious to engage with them at that time but the Guru ordered them not to fight till morning. With the dawn of the day the sikhs resumed

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1. Suraj Parkash mentions that the Guru had gone out hunting to the other side of the river Sutlej, when a scuffle arose between him and some Pathan troops camped there. But the above version given by the Guru's contemporary, Kavi Sena Patt in 'Guru Sobha' seems more plausible, because after the retreat of the Guru the Pahari troops were naturally encouraged and might have crossed the river to attack the Sikhs.
 2. Suraj Parkash and Gur Bilas differ a little in the details of this skirmish, but their differences are immaterial.

fighting and were ultimately successful. The village was then given up to complete plunder till the inhabitants begged for peace. The Guru then returned.

After a time¹, on the representation of some of the prominent Sikhs, the Guru came back to Anandpur. The Raja of Kahlur, thinking peace to be the best of the policy for the time being, sent some offerings to the Guru and a peace was patched up between them. The other hill chiefs also followed suit and there was peace for a time.

FIRST BATTLE OF CHAMKAUR.

or

Battle with Saida Beg and Alif Khan².

Though outwardly at peace Bhim Chand of Kahlur and Bhup Chand of Handur always thought of some means to destroy the Guru. Once when two officers of the Imperial army, Saida Beg and Alif Khan, were going from Lahore to Delhi, Bhim Chand promised them large sums of money and brought them to attack the Guru. The Guru was at this time, camped near Chamkaur and only a small contingent was with him. The Sikhs, however, determined to defend themselves.

Just when the battle was at its highest,

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1. It appears by that time the Imperial forces had returned to their headquarters.
 2. This and the following two actions are given by Sau Sakhi (Sakhi 20, 21, and 27) and Suraj Parkash. Gur Sobha and Gur Bilash have not mentioned them. Perhaps they were too small to attract notice at the time.

one of the generals, Saida Beg¹, hearing favourable accounts of the Guru was won over to his side and at a critical moment joined the Sikhs with as many men as he could persuade to join him. This break-up was noticed by Alif Khan who seeing no chance of success beat a retreat. The Sikhs pursued the fleeing troops to a distance and then returned to Anandpur.

Third battle of Anandpur.

This treacherous conduct of the hill chiefs greatly offended the Sikhs. In order to revenge themselves, they often raided the rajas' territory. All this created a state of utter lawlessness in the territory and complaints against this were often laid before the rajas.

At this Bhim Chand again decided to attack the Guru and invited other hill chiefs to join him. Rajas of Handur, Chamba, Wazir Singh of Fatehpur, Dev Saran of Nahan² and some others responded to the invitation. All united sent a letter to the Guru to the effect that they could not put up against his aggression and hence obliged to declare war on him. The Guru briefly replied³, "My Sikhs have only come

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1. Hence-forward this general stayed with the Guru and fought on his side in the 4th battle of Anandpur(see page 47 of this thesis).
 2. This obviously is a mistake of the author. The Guru was on friendly relations with the Raja of Nahan from the very beginning and these good relations continued till the end as is clear from the fact that the Guru sent his cousins Shiam Singh and Gulab Rai with a letter for help to the Raja of Nahan when he (the Guru) left the fort of Anandpur later on. The name of the Raja of Nahan at this time was Hari Parkash and not Dev Saran, which has been mentioned by mistake. (Suraj Parkash, page 5598, Footnote)
 3. Translated from the original in Suraj Parkash (page 5601).

into collision with those who have wantonly annoyed them. You are simply jealous of their power and cannot tolerate their presence in Dun valley. You are forcing this battle on me. If so, the Khalsa too, is ready for battle. You may come and try." On receiving this reply the hill chiefs proceeded to attack.

The Sikhs numbered only eight hundred. With these the Guru came in to the open to give battle. A fierce battle raged in which Alim Singh and Ude Singh fought with their usual valour on Guru's side. The Sikhs wanted to make a rush at the enemy but they were restrained from doing so by the Guru who gave them definite orders not to leave their place. For some time the battle continued in the same vein but then in a moment of flush the Sikhs left their place and made a charge upon the enemy. This proved disastrous for them. The Pahari troops faced them boldly and they had to retreat for a time with great loss. The Guru, however, again gathered his forces and urged them to face the enemy. He himself took up his bow and engaged in the battle. Thus encouraged the Sikhs made a great rush and were successful in putting the hill army to flight. The hill chiefs again held a council of war and sent an envoy with a large number of presents to the Emperor to get his help.

Fourth Battle of Anandpur.

Owing to repeated representations of the hill chiefs, Aurangzeb sent a large army under Saida Khan to reduce the Guru to submission. When the Imperial army reached Thanesar a Sikh hurried to Anandpur and informed the Guru of the arrival of the enemy.

The Guru had only five hundred men with him at that time, the rest having dispersed¹ to their homes. With these, however, he prepared to defend himself. Maimu Khan, a Muhammadan, who was devoted to the Guru and had lived for some time at Anandpur, now asked permission to face the enemy. The Guru was pleased at this and giving him a bow sent him forth to the field. Saida Beg² who had deserted the Imperial army, also joined Maimu Khan in the attack.

Seeing such great odds on the other side some Sikhs were afraid to engage in the battle and told that to the Guru. Urged by the Guru, however, they went forth and the battle ensued.

The Sikhs put up a bold defence: Saida Beg engaged in a single combat with Hari Chand, a hill chief on the enemy's side, and after a long struggle killed him. But just at that time Dina Beg of the Mughal army made a rush at him and he fell down mortally wounded. Maimu Khan also fought with great valour and wrought havoc among the enemy's troops.

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1. The usual practice was to disperse at harvest time.
 2. See Battle with Saida Beg and Alif Khan.

Said Khan, the Commander of the army left the field and went away¹. His place was, however, taken by Ramzan Khan who urged his followers and made a great rush at the Sikhs. The Guru at this took aim and shot an arrow at him, thus mortally wounding him. By this time it was clear to the Guru that the Sikhs could no longer stand the enemy. He, therefore, decided to evacuate Anandpur. The Muhammadans captured the city and plundered it. They then proceeded towards Sirhind.

Some of the Sikhs who were not satisfied with the issue of the battle now asked permission to attack the enemy from the rear. Having been allowed, they made a sudden attack on the enemy. This was quite unexpected and the Muhammadan army fell into confusion. Taking advantage of that the Sikhs got back the booty they were carrying with them and again captured Anandpur.

When Aurangzeb heard of this, he was greatly disturbed and determined to exterminate the Sikhs or to subdue them.

Fifth Battle of Anandpur.

Some time had elapsed after the battle of Basali. During this period, three minor actions had been fought with the Guru, in which success fluctuated on both sides. But the Guru's power was on the increase. Hundreds of disciples flocked to his court and in a short time he had

1. Tradition has it that Said Khan was related to Pir Budhu Shah and thus had imbibed admiration for the Guru from him. He, therefore, did not want to fight against him and went away.

amassed great wealth and power. All this was a constant source of jealousy for the hill chiefs who again gathered and made a strong representation to the Emperor.

Their envoy¹ represented that the Guru's power was increasing daily and he allowed them no rest. They added further that the Guru had assumed the title of 'Sacha Padshah' or The True King and often instigated them to join his religion and wage war against the throne of Delhi, but that they were ever loyal to the Emperor and this was the cause of their enmity with the Guru.

Aurangzeb who was² already thinking of putting a check on the rising power of the Sikhs, was further alarmed at the report of the hill chiefs and at once ordered a large army under Wazir Khan³ of Sarhind and Zabardast Khan of Lahore to proceed against the Guru. The Guru was informed of the orders of Aurangzeb by a faithful Sikh and accordingly he too began preparations to meet the enemy. Couriers were despatched to Sikh villages and many parties of Sikhs joined him from Manjha and Malwa. Also, just then many people had come to attend the Dewali fair. The Guru detained as many of them as he could persuade.

The Rajas who now took sides against the Guru were Bhim Chand of Kahlur, Ghumand

1. This time Bhim Chand of Kahlur had himself gone to Aurangzeb (see Suraj Parkash page 5737).

2. See page 48 of this thesis

3. Bute Shah mentions Shammas Khan as the Subedar of Sarhind (Twarikh-i-Punjab, page 174 B) but the Sikh historians are unanimous in giving the name as Wazir Khan.

Chand of Kangra, Bir Singh of Jaswal and Rajas of Nalagarh, Kulu, Kainthal, Mandi, Jammu, Nurpur, Chamba, Srinagar (Garhwal), Busher, Bijarwal, Darauli and Dadhwal. Rangars and Gujars, the old enemies of the Guru also joined the invading army. The two Subedars joined their armies near Ropar and were joined later on by the hill chiefs. All combined now marched on Anandpur.

Seeing the armies approach the Guru ordered his artillery-men to light their fuses and discharge their cannons. The enemy made a desperate charge to sieze the artillery but were restrained from effecting anything by the fire of the Guru's guns. Meanwhile the musketeers plied their arms at close quarters and took fatal aims at the cavalry men. They were well supported by men fighting in embrasures. The allied army was fighting without any protection and consequently fell in heaps before the city.

The battle continued with fearful violence. The guns were fired in such abundance that their smoke obscured the sky and their loud reports deafened the ear. The Guru seeing these, ordered his two generals, Ude Singh and Daya Singh to go to the front. They proceeded *en bloc* and cut down the enemy with great vehemence. The Subedars were astonished to see this unwonted destruction of their armies and rallied forth their men with encouraging words and promises of great rewards. The two armies were now engaged at close quarters and

the battle continued with great fierceness till the evening. On muster being taken it was found that nine hundred soldiers of the allied army lay dead on the field, the loss of lives on the Guru's side was comparatively much less.

At night the Subedars took council with the rajas and it was decided to batter the walls of the fort by the fire of guns, the next day.

With the dawn of the day the Guru's drums were beaten and the Sikhs marched out to give battle. The Guru himself mounted a charger and led the attack that day.

This was noticed by the enemy who then aimed all their guns at them. The firing, however, was aimed too high and did not make any great effect on the Sikhs. Seeing this a charge was made by the cavarly. They again fought at close quarters and the fearful carnage of the preceding day was renewed. The Guru himself had taken up his bow and the Sikhs were plying their arms with marvellous effect. They had also the advantage of position and the enemy was successfully repulsed for the day¹.

Unable to make much effect on the Sikhs in open battle, the allied army now laid siege

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1. On the third day the Imperial armies again renewed their assault. Seeing the Guru and his Sikhs gathered in a Diwan at a distance, they opened fire on them. At this some of the Sikhs requested the Guru not to expose himself so much. The Guru, however, replied, "I have no fear since I am protected by the armour of my Lord. He is my protector, and a spear, an arrow or a bullet can do me no harm." Just as they were talking thus, cannon balls hurled over their heads in the air but once more their position saved them and the enemy's fire was either aimed too high or too low.

to the city and stopped all ingress and egress.

The Sikhs too, now took the defensive. The Guru made five divisions of his army. One contingent of five hundred was placed under his son Ajit Singh and stationed in Keshgarh. Another division of the same strength was placed under Sher Singh and Nahar Singh to defend Lohgarh. The third division under Alim Singh and Ude Singh was to look after Agampura and the surrounding part of the city. Mohkam Singh with four hundred other Sikhs took charge of Holgarh. Daya Singh with his men was to look after the northern ramparts, and the rest of his army the Guru kept with him in Anandgarh. His general instructions to his Sikhs were to fight behind the walls and not to sally out as far as possible. They were to be ever on the watch and to repulse the assault of the enemy, if any.

The Muhammadans and hill chiefs had now completely invested the city and the Guru's supplies were failing.

On one occasion it was observed that the enemy had come very close to the city and were far away from their defences. Sher Singh and Nahar Singh at this planned a night-attack. The Sikhs sallied forth from the fort and fell on the enemy unawares. It was pitch dark at that time and the suddenness of the attack threw the enemy into confusion. Unknowingly they killed several of their own men and there ensued an internecine slaughter. When the Guru came to know of this bold

attack, he sent for both the leaders and suitably rewarded them.

The Muhammadan generals were distressed to learn this and reprimanded those in charge, for their negligence. They tried to storm the citadel the next day but the Sikhs brought forth two of their biggest guns¹, viz. Baghan (Tigress) and Bijai Gosh (sound of victory) and fired them with such precision that the enemy had to retreat to their camps.

As their supplies were constantly failing, the Sikhs now resorted to desultory sallies from time to time and seized supplies from the enemy. For some time the Sikhs were successful in this, and on one occasion they seized large supplies which lasted them for many days. But soon the enemy learnt their tactics and strengthened their watch. Now when the Sikhs went forth for supplies they often returned with great losses, and once, when the enemy got scent of the attack beforehand, not a single Sikh out of those who had gone out to seize supplies could return to the fort.

The long siege was now beginning to tell upon the garrison of the fort. Provisions were exhausted, the stream which supplied them with water was cut off and diverted by Bhim Chand's men to some other side. "Provisions became so dear as to sell at one seer a rupee and they could not be had even at this cost. If

1 Two of the Guru's guns used on this occasion are preserved in the Lahore Museum. They cannot, however, be Baghan and Bijai Gosh as they were very big.

four Sikhs went forth to bring water for them, two of them died fighting, the remaining two only succeeded in bringing some of it for their needs.¹ The Guru's stores were completely finished and generally no rations were served to his troops. Often the Sikhs ground down the bark of trees and lived on the bread thus prepared, or on fruits or leaves of any trees they could get.

The Rajas now formed plans to induce the Guru to leave the fort. They sent envoys to him with the promise that their troops would not attack them while they vacated Anandpur. When the Sikhs, already decimated by the hardships of the blockade, heard of this offer from the hill chiefs they too, with the mother of the Guru requested the Guru to accept their offer and leave the fort. The Guru, however, had no faith in the promises of the hill chiefs and admonished his Sikhs to wait a little longer.

The Guru then adopted a strange stratagem to explain the hollowness of their promises to his Sikhs. He gave out that he with his Sikhs would vacate the city, provided his treasure was first conveyed out safely. Many bullocks were then loaded with broken articles like saddles, rags and other sweepings of the city and covered with a golden cloth to show that they carried wealth. Tying burning misals (a sort of crude torch prepared by lighting sticks of wood) to the bullocks' horns, he then sent

1. Translated from the original in Gur Sobha, page 59.

them out accompanied by some of his Sikhs. As these passed through the enemy's camp, inspite of all their promises to the contrary they fell upon it and looted all what they thought to be a big treasure, but which later on proved to be mere rags, to their utter dismay.

By such means the Guru succeeded in keeping his Sikhs in for seven months. Then arrived an autograph from the Emperor to the Guru. In this he had vowed¹ not to harm him if he capitulated, and further asked the Guru to proceed to his court where he would have a talk with him, but if he did not like that, he might go wherever he liked. When the Sikhs came to know of this they repeated their request to him to leave the fort. The Guru's mother who could not bear to see such misery of the Sikhs also urged on the Guru to evacuate the city. The Guru, however, was adamant. He knew and warned his Sikhs that they would all be killed if they left the protection of the fort. If, however, they would not stay he asked them

1. The Guru himself refers to this oath in his letter to Aurangzeb. The lines are.

مرا اعتبارے بریں قسم نیست کہ ایزد گواہ است یزدان یکیت
نہ قطره مرا اعتبارے بر و است کہ بخشی و دیوان ہمہ ذب گوست
کسی قول قرآن کند اعتبار ہمیں روز آخر شود مرد خار

As translated by Macauliffe (page 202) it would read: as have no faith in thy oath which thou tookest the one God "I witness. I have not a particle of confidence in thee. Thy treasurer and thy ministers are all false. He who putteth faith in thine oath on Quran is thereby a ruined man."

to renounce him and give that to him in writing. The Sikhs by this time had been reduced to sore straits and death to them outside the fort was no worse than the life within. Hence they prepared a deed of renunciation and handed it over to the Guru.

The Guru had in vain waited for reinforcements from outside. Thus pressed by his Sikhs he had now no other alternative but to leave. Accordingly he set fire to all that was valuable in the fort and prepared to leave at night.

Just when the night was pitch dark, the first batch consisting of Guru's mother with his two younger sons, his wives and those men who were unfit for action, left the fort. The Guru then rode out. Daya Singh, Alam Singh and Ude Singh walked in front, the second batch of the baptised Sikhs were on his left, Mohkam Singh on the right, his two elder sons and Himat Singh walked behind. About five hundred Sikhs brought up the rear.

The Guru first proceeded to Ram Ghanola¹ and from thence towards Kiratpur. Just when they reached Nirmoh, the allied army fell on them and attacked them from behind. Ude Singh then took permission to relieve the rear guard under Ajit Singh, and died fighting in the attempt. Meanwhile the Guru hurried on till he reached the stream called Sarsa. Here he deputed Jiwan Singh, another of his bravest

1. This is a village some eight or nine 'kos' from Kiratpur. The Sikhs have built up a Gurdawara here. (Suraj Parkash annotated by Bhai Vir Singh, page 5840 footnote.)

Sikhs to go to Ajit Singh's help. He too was killed in the attempt. The Guru with forty of his Sikhs and his two eldest sons, however, managed to reach Chamkaur.

Second Battle of Chamkaur.

The allied army continued their pursuit and a fresh contingent was on its way from Delhi to reinforce them. Hearing this the Guru commandeered¹ a small fort belonging to a Jat and prepared to give what battle he could to the enemy.

He appointed eight men each side to protect the four walls of the fortress. Kotha Singh and Madan Singh were to protect the gate. Alim Singh and Man Singh were appointed sentinels, while the Guru with his two sons and Daya Singh and Sant Singh took to the second storey.

Meanwhile a vast host of the enemy approached. Seeing them, the Guru addressed his men: "You would not listen to my advice to remain in Anandpur. When you took your departure you did not calculate that this time of peril would ever arrive. You trusted to the oaths of the Muhammadans on the Quran and of the hill men on their gods and cow and this is the result. There is no use employing the

1. Sena Pat mentions in Gur Sobha (page 33) that the Jat had willingly offered the fortress to the Guru and requested him to proceed thither, but taking into consideration the general panic caused by the news of the pursuit of the Imperial army, the version of Gur Bilas and Suraj Parkash that the Guru placed the owner under arrest and forcibly seized it for battle seems more plausible.

traditional means of dealing with the enemies. We can only defend ourselves. There are hundreds of thousands against us. Die not the death of jackals, but fight bravely as you have hitherto done and avenge the deceit practised by those great sinners. The more you strive the greater shall be your reward. If you fall fighting you shall meet me as martyrs in Heaven. If you conquer you shall have sovereignty and in either case your lot shall be envied by mortals." The Sikhs now began to return the fire of the enemy by their arrows. All of them shot together and when some of the enemy came too near the fort, the Sikhs in batches of two or three sallied out and fell upon them.

Arrayed against² such numbers the Sikhs were fighting against sure death, but not one of them was dismayed or discouraged and they cheerfully went out to die for what they thought to be the highest honour in life and death, i. e. to die for the Guru.

Kotha Singh and Madan Singh were the first batch to go out. They were followed by Khazan Singh, Dan Singh and Dhayan Singh. Muhkam Singh was the next. All of them fell

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1. Translated from the original (Suraj Parkash, page 5862) by Macauliffe, page 187.
 2. Later on while writing to Aurangzeb the Guru mentions the number of enemy's troops to be ten lacks meaning a very large number. Gur Bilas and Suraj Parkash probably taking the same source literally mention the same number. A Mohammedan contemporary writer in 'Ahkam-i-Alamgiri Rampuri' (page 255 B-256 A), however, has given the number of the cavalry excluding the artillery engaged in the siege to be seven hundred only. In view of these two different accounts whatever the exact number may be this much is certain that the sikhs were fighting against fearful odds.

fighting bravely, killing twice or thrice their own number,

Himmat Singh was the next victim, after whom the second batch of the baptised Sikhs with Ishar Singh and Deva Singh went out. All of them fought like heroes but were helpless against such numbers and died fighting.

Just at this time the remaining Sikhs requested the Guru to leave the fort. "If the Guru was saved," they said, "the seed of the Faith would be saved." The Guru, however, in reply only harangued them to continue. Six more of the Guru's warriors, viz. Mohar Singh, Kirat Singh, Anand Singh, Lall Singh, Kesar Singh and Amolak Singh then went out to try their strength. They were all killed.

Nahar Khan¹, an officer of the Imperial

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1. Later on while writing to Aurangzeb, the Guru refers to the battle of Chamkaur and the death of Nahar Khan in the following words: "What could the forty hungry men accomplish when such a large number of the enemy attacked them unawares. The oath-breakers fell on them with arrows, swords and muskets. I was forced to engage in the combat and I fought with guns and arrows to the best of my ability. When an affair passes beyond all remedy it is lawful to take sword in hand..... Clad in black, your army came like flies and all of a sudden charged with a loud shout. Every soldier who left his protection got an arrow and fell down in a pool of blood. Only those who did not leave their cover were safe from my arrows. When I saw Nahar Khan enter the battle I at once gave him a taste of my arrows. Many soldiers who boasted of their prowess left the field of battle with him. Another Pathan officer advanced like a rushing flood, an arrow or a musket ball, he made several assaults bravely, some sensibly others senselessly; he made many attacks and received many wounds. He killed two and was himself killed. Khawaja Mardud remained behind cover and did not come forth in the field like a man. I wish I had seen his face and bestowed an arrow on him, as well. Many were killed on both sides by the showers of arrows and bullets and the earth was red like a

army at this time tried to scale the walls of the fort but was immediately shot down by the Guru. Another of the Mughal officers Ghairat Khan who made a similar attempt met a similar fate.

The Guru's son Ajit Singh with five others, Alam Singh, Jawahar Singh, Dhyan Singh, Sukha Singh and Bir Singh now went forth. They all performed prodigies of valour but Ajit Singh's name is mentioned in particular. He was equally¹ skilled in the use of the bow, sword and spear and killed many of his opponents before he himself fell.

Jujhar Singh², the Guru's second son, with five more Sikhs, was the next to meet his death

[Continued from last page].

tulip. Heads and legs lay in heaps as if the field was covered with balls and polo-sticks. The arrows whizzed, the bows twanged and a great noise reached the sky. Brave men also forgot themselves on hearing the whizze of the revengeful arrows. What bravery can forty men show in a fight when surrounded by hundreds. The sun went down and the Queen of night shone in all her splendour. I had put faith on an oath so God showed me the way. Not a hair of mine was touched nor my body suffered. He Himself took me out of the enemy's lines."

1. Writing about the skill of Ajit Singh in using arms Kavi Sena Pat mentions thus. "Taking the bow in his hand he wielded it with great skill. His arrows pierced through the armour and struck the breasts of his targets. Whomsoever they struck fell down humbled. He (his target) forgot all about this world and became unconscious. He killed the Pathans in this way when he attacked them. Putting down his bow he took up his spear. All arms he wielded with equal skill.....He impaled many Pathans with his spear. Even a sight of him made them cry 'My Lord, have mercy on us'. When his spear was broken he took up his sword and says the poet, "Taking the sword in his hand the brave warrior fought the battle and killed many a commander of the army."
2. Suraj Parkash mentions the name Zorawar Singh instead of Jujhar Singh which, however, is incorrect. For the detailed discussion on the names of the Guru's sons see Suraj Parkash, page 4830 [Vol. XII].

fighting.

It was now dark; seeing all hopes at an end and pressed by the remaining Sikhs the Guru decided to effect his escape. Three of the remaining five, viz. Daya Singh, Dharam Singh and Man Singh were to go with him while Sangat Singh¹ and Sant Singh² were left in the fort. The last mentioned was made to put on the Guru's dress and himself putting on a guise, the Guru escaped under the cover of darkness.

As the day dawned the enemy captured the fort and cut off the head of Sant Singh whom they wrongly believed for a time to be the Guru³ himself.

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1. There seems to be some confusion between the names of Sant Singh and Sangat Singh. Gur Sobha mentions that Sant Singh died fighting before the Guru left Chamkaur. Sant Singh Arora was an inhabitant of Patti in Manjha. His son Hara Singh got a 'Hukamnama' from the Guru. This is still preserved by his descendants. Bhai Vir Singh on further research has found out that this Hara Singh after getting the 'Hukamnama' migrated to Peshawar where it is still found with a descendant of the family, Mai Butki in Kucha Bhaian, Mohalla Ganj. Bhai Sahib has seen that with his own eyes. (Suraj Parkash annotated by Bhai Vir Singh, page 5888 footnote).
 2. It is mentioned that coming out of the fort, the Guru first put out with his arrows the burning torches which two of the Muhammadan sentries were holding and effected his escape in the darkness and confusion thus caused. His three companions were separated in the attempt but later joined him in Machhiwara forest.
 3. Gur Sobha mentions that when the rest of the Sikhs were killed, the Guru himself went out to fight and got a finger cut off. After this he says, the Guru effected his escape. Taking into consideration the odds against the Guru it, however, seems unlikely that he could effect his escape if he openly faced them. It is just possible that while passing through the enemy's ranks in darkness he should have been unknowingly attacked by somebody where he might have lost his finger. No mention of the loss of the finger is, however, made by other Sikh historians. The Guru himself makes no mention of it in Zafarnama.

Battle of Muktsar.

After leaving Chamkaur the Guru went to Machhiwara forest. Tired and fatigued by the hardships of the journey he laid himself under a tree and fell asleep. Soon after, however, he was awakened by his three followers who had been separated from him when they had come out of the Chamkaur fortress. They then proceeded to a village nearby. Two Muhammadans, Ghani Khan and Nabi Khan, at this time met the Guru. They had experienced some kindness at his hands when he was still at Anandpur, where they often went to trade in horses. Feelings of gratitude and humanity were roused within them, when they saw the Guru in this state and they offered to serve him.

The Guru gladly accepted their offer and used their services in this way. Clothing himself and his Sikhs in blue he let his hair loose on his shoulders and thus assumed the guise of a Muhammadan 'Pir'. Ghani Khan and Nabi Khan with two of his Sikhs now carried him on a 'Palang' (a big charpai strung with Nawar) and the third Sikh waved a 'Chauri' behind him. In this way they started towards Berar¹.

They had not gone far, when they accidentally came across a contingent of the Muhammadan army. Resistance was out of question and safety lay in diplomacy. The palang-bearers when seized and questioned at once gave out

1. Berar is in Malwa in the present districts of Ferozepur and a part of Patiala State.

that they were the servants of the 'Pir of Uchch'¹ who was on tour visiting his followers. The commander of the troops, however, insisted that if he was really so he should dine with them in the evening. The Guru readily² consented to that, and he and his Sikhs partook of the dinner prepared for them.

After this narrow escape the Guru reached the region called Berar. He then lived for some time at Dina near Kangar. While at this place, he wrote a letter to Aurangzeb in which he explained to him that his Subedars had unnecessarily troubled him and that he had taken up sword only in self-defence. He further blamed the Emperor for his promise-breaking³ after the evacuation of Anandpur fort. The Guru told the Emperor in rather a denunciatory language that as far as his worldly greatness was concerned he (the Guru) unquestionably accepted his authority, but he did not acknowledge him as a leader of religion and bitterly condemned his policy of religious persecution. The Guru further proceeded to advise him to leave his policy of troubling the innocent for their religious beliefs and ended his letter thus: "Be not heedless,

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1. 'Uchch ka Pir' means either a high priest or a priest of a town in the south-western Punjab called 'Uchch'. These were held in great respect and awe by the Muhammadans.
 2. According to another version, when the Muhammadans invited them to dinner the bearers told them that their Pir was observing a fast, and took nothing but a grain of barley every day, but that they were ready to do so. The Sikhs then took the meals prepared for them after touching it first with their daggers and thus purifying it according to their notions.
 3. See page 55-56 of the book.

this caravansarai (world) is only for a few days. People leave it at all times. Behold the revolution which passes over every denizen and house in this faithless world. Even though thou art strong, annoy not the weak. Lay not the axe to thy kingdom. When God is a friend what can an enemy do even though he may multiply himself a hundred times? If an enemy practised enmity a thousand times, he cannot, as long as God is a friend, injure even a single hair of one's head.¹

Bhai Daya Singh, one of the Guru's followers who had escaped with him from Chamkaur, was entrusted with the letter and he proceeded to the Deccan to deliver it to the Emperor.

Meanwhile, many of the Sikhs who lived in the surrounding country began to gather under the Guru's banner and soon he had a considerable number of soldiers under him. When this was reported to Wazir Khan of Sarhind, he sent a large army against the Guru.

Hearing the despatch of troops, the Guru moved from Dina and requested the Chaudhri of Kot Kapura to allow him the use of his fortress for facing the enemy. The Chaudhri, however, feared the wrath of the Muhammadans and refused to give his fortress to the Guru, who then proceeded to Khidrana (afterwards known as Muktsar now in Ferozepur District). The country was a desert all round and the

1 From Macauliffe's translation of the Zafarnama or the Guru's letter to Aurangzeb (The Sikh Religion, Vol. V, page 206)

only pool of water was where the Guru had camped.

The Imperial troops continued the pursuit and soon reached the desert where the Guru lay encampod. An unexpected help reached the Guru at this time. The Manjha Sikhs who had renounced¹ the Guru at Anandpur, had always felt the stigma on their name for leaving the Guru at the time of difficulty and just then made a good party² and were on way to the Guru to apologise³ for their past action. When these Sikhs saw the enemy they decided to give battle and thus wash off the past stain by their death.

To give an exaggerated idea of their numbers they threw their 'Chaddars' (bed sheets) on the surrounding bushes and gave them the shape of pitched tents.

The Imperial troops now opened their attack and a contested battle ensued. The Sikhs had already decided to sell their lives dearly

1. See page 56 above.

2. Suraj Parkash says that the Sikhs who engaged the enemy numbered only forty, but neither Gur Bilas nor Gur Sooha have mentioned any number; and in view of their success over the troops it seems that they must have been much larger in number.

3. Suraj Parkash mentions that their motive in going to the Guru was to advise him to stop hostilities with the Emperor and thus allow his Sikhs peace, and that they had met the Guru who had given them a blank reply again. He mentions that it was on their way back that seeing the approach of the enemy some of them offered to fight. The version given in the text is from Gur Bilas and seemingly more plausible, because after the battle when the Guru finds the leader of the party still with some life, the only request that he makes to the Guru is to tear off the deed of renunciation.

and fought desperately. The Guru¹ who was encamped near by, also shot arrows at the enemy and killed many.

The battle continued for a few hours, but the enemy was hard pressed for want of water. No water could be had nearby, the only pool² being where the Guru had himself camped. Their commander, therefore beat a retreat and the Sikhs were victorious.

After they had gone away, the Guru came to the scene of action and found that one Mahan Singh (who had led the Sikhs going to the Guru) had still some life in him. The Guru washed his wounds and he regained some strength. When asked for his last wish he requested the Guru to tear off the deed of renunciation which they had written at Anandpur. The Guru asked him to ask for some thing else but being pressed for that, he took out the paper and tore it into pieces. The Guru then cremated the dead bodies and the place came to be called 'Muktsar'³ in memory of those, who had given their lives for the Guru. Those forty who died here are called 'Forty Saved Ones'.

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1. Gur Bilas and Suraj Parkash mention only the personal help of the Guru. It is, however, just possible that the Sikhs with him might also have taken part in it. Gur Sobha's account, where he mentions that the Guru and Sikhs all engaged in the battle, confirms that.
 2. Suraj Parkash mentions that even that pool of water had dried up and the guide of the Muhammadan army (who was one of the believers in the Guru) told them that they could not get it for miles ahead and their only hope lay in going back.
 3. Mukat (ਮੁਕਤ): means salvation; Sar means tank. MukatSar thus means the Tank of Salvation, because those who fell on the spot were no more subject to transmigration.

and are remembered in the daily prayer of the Sikhs.

The last battle of Anandpur, Chamkaur and Muktsar, were fought in succession with perhaps an interval of some days between the latter two. Sukha Singh, the author of *Gur Bilas*,¹ gives the date of the Battle of Anandpur as Sambat 1761. I think this date may be taken as correct for in view of the letters² of the Guru to Dacca Sangat, these battles seem to have been fought after Sambat 1758, when the Guru is still asking for war elephants, etc. The ascension of the Guru took place in the Deccan in Sambat 1765. After the battle of Muktsar, the Guru stayed for some time at Damdama where he is said to have compiled a copy of the holy Granth. He then travelled to Deccan and stayed for some time at Nader, before he was stabbed to death. All this time may be reasonably taken to extend to three or four years. Sambat 1761, i. e. 1704 A. D. may, therefore, be taken as correct. The battle of Chamkaur and Mukatsar may have been fought in the same year or in the beginning of the next, i. e. Sambat 1762 or 1705 A. D.

This was practically the end of the Guru's martial career. After this Guru is said to have sent some men to help Bahadur Shah in the

1. *Gur Bilas*, page 419.

2. Photo litho copies of the Guru's two letters to Dacca are with me.

battle of Jajau.¹ Khafi Khan does not mention any soldiers having been sent by the Guru to the battle of Jajau, but says that later on he with two or three hundred warriors joined Bahadur Shah when he was going to the Deccan to give battle to Kam Bakhsh; but whether he actually took part in the battle is not authenticated.

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1. There is a letter of Guru Gobind Singh to the inhabitants of Dhaul (ਧੌਲ) tract round about Anandpur saying that Bahadur Shah had granted him a khillat, of Rs. 60,000 and a Dhuk-dhuki (golden chain with a pendant) and that talks were proceeding satisfactorily on other matters under discussion and he might soon return to the Punjab.

CHAPTER IV

The Organisation of the Guru's Army

In this chapter I propose to deal at some length with the details of organisation such as recruitment, equipment, methods of fighting, of the Guru's army and the general habits and peculiarities of the Khalsa soldiers at that time.

As in the general organisation of the brotherhood called the Khalsa so Recruitment. in the Khalsa army, recruitment was made irrespective of caste and creed. The bulk of the army, however, was composed of those who had accepted the Sikh religion. Except that the Guru kept a small force with himself the soldiers dispersed at the time of harvest and during periods of inactivity. It is likely that some rough sort of registration of their names, etc. was kept with the Guru for Sena Pat says, "The Sikh 'sangats', arrived there from near and far. The Guru employed most of them. He numbered them and gave them arms." The author of Suraj Parkash also mentions the same procedure. "When the people gathered round the Guru, he asked them to join his army. Those who were then willing to join, got their names registered and their descriptive rolls prepared." All enlistment to the

1. Gur Sobha, Page 48.

2. See page 5747, Suraj Parkash

Guru's army was voluntary. Some of the Sikhs even did not accept any salaries, but generally they were paid either¹ daily or six monthly allowances.

There is no mention of any standardised and regular form of discipline through which the soldiers might have been compelled to pass before the organization of the Khalsa, and in the battle of Bhangani we find many of the Sikhs who took part had never learnt the use of arms. Later, however, the Guru naturally paid closer attention to matters of military efficiency of his soldiers. Every Sikh was required to be armed with at least a Kirpan and learn its use. From time to time the Guru got big pans of halwa prepared and placing them in an open plain ordered his soldiers to loot it, the motive being to habituate his followers to act without hesitation in actual engagement. The Guru sometimes arranged² mock fights wherein dividing his Sikhs into two parties he placed some property in charge of one party and asked the other to loot it. They were thus taught how to charge and defend themselves. Besides, the Guru often arranged big hunting parties wherein the Sikhs sometimes engaged in single combats with wild beats and thus practised the use of their arms.

1. Gur Bilas, Page 483.

2. An interesting account of a mock fight is given in Mahma Parkash Wartak, page 149 B-150 A.

The Sikhs used both offensive and defensive weapons in their battles. Among the first may be included¹ bows and arrows, two edged daggers, spears, swords, lances, teghas (cutlasses), pikes, muskets and guns. The shield prepared from hide was their main weapon of defence. They mainly fought on horse-back. They also possessed one or two war elephants².

An ordinary soldier shot one arrow at a time and its range was from two furlongs to half a mile; some good warriors, however, could shoot two arrows with one hand. The Guru himself could shoot both with his right and left hand. Hari Chand of Handur, could shoot two arrows with either hand and commanded a much greater range than others. The matchlocks and guns had of course very limited range, as the quality of metal and the powder used therein was much inferior when compared to modern standards.

The method of warfare was crude, the opposing armies almost always engaging at close quarters. Combats were frequent to meet the challenges of the individuals. This, indeed, was the most attractive form of fight, as being

1. See Suraj Parkash, page 5243.

2. I possess photo-litho copies of the Guru's two letters to the Sikhs of Dacca. In the first the Guru asks them to send him a war elephant and in the second the receipt of the elephant is acknowledged. The second letter is dated Phagan 10, Sambat 1758, i. e. 1701 A. D.

the one which allowed personal heroism to come out glaringly. It was equally popular with the public and the chronicles of the period often refer to them. The combats of Kirpal and Hayat Khan, the Guru and Hari Chand Handuri, Ude Singh and Kesri Chand, the Guru and Painda Khan may be taken as typical examples. Again bold frontal attacks were made as frequently as besieging the garrisons and reducing them to surrender by starvation and exhaustion. The hardships that the Sikhs had to undergo at the time of Anandpur siege have already been mentioned. When the Sikh soldiers fought in the embrasures, their ladies and those unfit for active action generally served them with water and other necessities, at their place. The author of Gur Bilas (page 393) gives a nice description of that, "While the Sikhs continued to fight bravely and calmly in their embrasures, the ladies and other Udisis or Bhagats (unfit for active service) placed gharas (earthen jars) on their shoulders and served them with water."

It is quite clear from the texts that the Treatment of the dead & Wounded. usual code of honour and regard towards the dead of the enemy existed among the Sikhs as among other medieval communities. The dead bodies of Sikhs were generally cremated and those of the Muhammadans collected and buried. The wounded were attended to with care. The bark of Sal tree (ਸਾਲ ਪੱਤ) is mentioned to have been used by the Sikhs for dressing

their wounds. The remedy was considered efficacious and the author of Suraj Parkash mentions some learned Hakim, Shah Sikandar of Guram, as having taught its use¹ to the Sikhs.

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1. Suraj Parkash, page 5629. The Hakim seems to have taught special method of applying the Sal Pattar as it was already in use for the purpose.

CHAPTER V

Causes of the success of the Khalsa

From 1685 A.D. to 1705 A.D. the Guru and his Sikhs had engaged in about fourteen actions and were victorious in almost all of them, except when hopelessly out-numbered by large numbers of Imperial troops. Towards the end of the Guru's career, they remained successful or at least succeeded in definitely challenging all attempts at their suppression. The causes for these successes might be adduced in the following manner.

The weakness of the hill chiefs had a lot to do with the success of the Khalsa in the beginning. Though outwardly making a common cause some of the chiefs never had their heart in it. Their mutual jealousies were too much to allow them to make a solid compact, and some of them like Rajas of Mandi, Basali and others while joining the coalition against the Guru for fear of exclusion from their own brotherhood, privately sympathised with the Guru. The coalition of the hill chiefs also lacked any first rate leadership. The pride of clan and caste was too powerful a barrier to allow them to join under a single leader. Further, while the hill chiefs by themselves could not cope with the Guru, they could not get effective help from the Imperial Government in the beginning. The Central Government till then cared very little for these hilly tracts from which it could not get

much; and the importance of the rise of the Khalsa was not seen just then.

The Guru took full advantage of all this. While his successes against the hill chiefs encouraged and rejuvenated his soldiers and brought ever-increasing numbers to serve under him, he gradually by training and discipline and by the use of better arms made them more and more fit and thus increased the intrinsic strength of his army. During this period the Guru also built up several small fortresses at strategic points round about Anandpur and fortified the town against any powerful attack. The natural position of Anandpur, being situated just at the foot of the hills, and the fortification of the Guru during this period, helped him greatly when the Imperial armies attacked him later.

The inherent weaknesses of the Mughal army were present in a worse form in the provincial Imperial armies that were sent against the Guru, and in the beginning the disagreement among the officers-in-charge of the army greatly helped the Sikhs. Twice the high officers of the Mughal army, Saida Beg and Said Khan, deserted¹ their side and went over to the Guru and in the battles of Anandpur the command of the Mughal army was often placed in the hands of more than one officer.

The intense religious enthusiasm of the Sikhs was another cause that contributed largely to their success. A 'Khalsa' when he

1. See pages 45 and 48 above.

went to the field was convinced of the righteousness of his cause, and was imbued with the spirit that he was doing it for the good of his Panth and the humanity round him and that his death in action would mean honour in this world and peace in the next. Death had no fear for him on that account and he styled it (death) only as an expedition to the next world. When the Sikhs heard of a coming battle, they were pleased rather than dismayed and describing the sieges of Anandpur Suraj Parkash writes, "The Sikhs were delighted at the prospect of the battle and congratulated themselves on their good fortune in being allowed to fight for their Guru and their faith. Several of them put on saffron coloured clothes in token of rejoicing and said, 'we have only four days to live in this world. Why should we not obtain the exalted dignity of martyrdom which will ensure salvation?' The Sikhs had their heart in the cause for which they had taken up the sword and every one thought it his duty to do his little bit towards that end. They were not mere mercenaries like their opponents.¹"

The leadership of the Guru also counted for much of their success. Adept in the use of arms, the Guru had also a wonderful courage and spirit. He had proclaimed by the beat of drum that a khalsa would be a match for a lac and a quarter of the enemy and that he would lead the sparrow to kill a falcon, and nothing

1. As translated by Macauliffe, page 167.

could lesson his healthy optimism in his destiny. Even when he had lost Anandpur, and all his kith and kin were killed in the battle he was not dismayed and wrote to Aurangzeb in a spirit of defiance which is so characteristic of all his career.

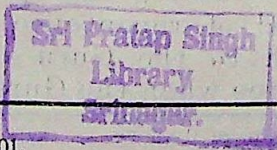
This succeeded in inspiring his soldiers and followers who for various reasons felt eager and ready to obey him implicitly. The Guru worked upon their religious and martial instincts in a manner that made them fight with the utmost courage and determination. That the Sikhs depended rather too much on his personal leadership in battle is shown by the fact that when fighting with Balia Chand and Alam Chand¹ and one or two other occasions the Sikhs were almost defeated till the Guru joined them.

The faithful devotion of the Sikhs to the Guru was another cause for their success in the field. Once when the Guru had ordered them to do a certain thing, come what may, the Sikhs must accomplish that or die in the attempt. There is only one example where we find some Sikhs deserting the Guru during the siege of Anandpur, but even in that case the deserters marked with ignomy by their comrades returned to the Guru and died fighting for him, thus washing the sign of desertion by their blood of repentance. The devotion of the Sikhs to the Guru is shown in a wonderful degree when the Guru was staying with one

1. See page 21 above.

Dalla; he asked two of his Sikhs to be a target to his gun which he wanted to try on them. Both of them, it is mentioned, started quarrelling amongst them as to who should have the honour of dying by the hand of the Guru. On the other hand we find that the enemy's troops were always made of mercenaries and had no such devotion to their leaders or a common cause as urged the Sikhs to die fighting.

These were the causes which led the Khalsa to obtain victory over the hill chiefs and withstand the onslaughts of the Mughals. True it is that the Guru had to give way before superior numerical strength of Imperial troops and even at one time his life was in danger but that cannot detract from the measure of success that he achieved with proportionately much smaller force than that of his enemies. As Malcolm says, "It was not possible that he could create means in a few days to oppose with success the forces of one of the greatest empires of the Universe." The spirit that he infused into his followers was handed down as a rich inheritance to their children and "though he did not actually break the shackles that bound his nation he had set their souls free and filled their hearts with a lofty longing for freedom and ascendancy."²



1 Sketch of the Sikhs, page 3.

2 Transformation of Sikhism, page 101.

